TALES OF A TOURIST.

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TALES OF A TOURIST.

CONTAINING

THE OUTLAW,

AND

FASHIONABLE CONNEXIONS.

In Four Volumes.

BY MISS LEFANU,

AUTHOR OF

STRATHALLAN, LEOLIN ABBEY, HELEN MONTEAGLE, &c.

From legend old, that hoary Time supplies,
To modern manners, changing as they rise,
The Wand'rer darts his keen, inquiring glance;
And, as the comic or the grave prevails,
With living portraits decks his sportive Tales,
Or gorgeous colouring of wild Romance. *Creation's Heir.*

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TALES OF A TOURIST.

CONTINUATION OF

THE OUTLAW.

CHAPTER I.

> But still her lips refus'd to send "Farewell,"
> For in that word, that fatal word, howe'er
> We promise, hope, believe, there breathes despair.
>
> *The Corsair.*

THE morning after Geraldine's departure, lady Louisa found two memorials of her, placed in her ladyship's dressing-room, which affected her not a little; a Head of Vesta, and a group, representing Charity, both of her own sculpture, and which proved that her talents must have been exerted, for months, upon subjects

which her friend had once expressed a desire to see her execute. Accustomed to the effect produced by the animating presence of Geraldine, which, like light diffused through every part, was rather felt when lost, than valued when possessed, lady Louisa was scarcely prepared for the sudden suspension of interest, produced by the withdrawing of that radiant vision, which had shone, for a time, on her domestic hours. The cottage she planned, the trees she planted, the harp on which she played, were all now neglected, and had lost their power to please; and when lady Louisa compared the active, intelligent, all-pervading spirit—the modest, the beneficent, the tenderly-feeling character, she had driven from these shades, to the envious heart, the rayless mind, of her own daughter—could she wonder the discriminating O'Melvyl should make his election in favour of the stranger—an election in which interest at least could not be said to sway him, as Matilda was heiress to sir Charles

Charles Southwell's large possessions, while Geraldine just possessed fortune enough not to be denominated a portionless bride.

Meanwhile our heroine had been rendered as happy as the warmest welcome, given by Mr. and Mrs. Rainsford to her and her follower, could make her; she was put in possession of a delightful apartment, and on the morrow Mrs. Rainsford proposed to do the honours of the country to her fair guest.

The following morning being fine, the ladies agreed to take an excursion on horseback. The novelty of the scene, as Geraldine had never visited the Black Rock before, the salubrity of the air, and the flattering conversation of Mrs. Rainsford, had put her into a better humour than she had been for some time past.

They were however thinking of returning, when the sight of several gentlemen on horseback, in the royal uniform, attracted the attention of the merchant's lady. One of them advanced, at a brisk

 pace,

pace, before the rest, yet, as he approached, rather endeavoured to check and rein in his spirited charger. He had now saluted Miss Southwell, who discovered, we will not say with how much satisfaction, that it was lord O'Melvyl.

Blooming, from renovated health, spirits, and exercise, each beauty heightened by the unexpected pleasure of the meeting, a moment these lovers gazed, in silent and mutual admiration, as if they had seen each other for the first time; but with this admiration was mingled a tender delight, which could only be the result of long and endearing intimacy.

Geraldine was the first to recover herself, and, after introducing him to Mrs. Rainsford, blushing, exclaimed—" I little thought to meet you here; I thought you, by this time, on your way to Meadows-court."

" And therefore you fled hither to avoid me. Barbarous, ungrateful Geraldine !" continued O'Melvyl, with a smile of confidence

fidence that a little belied his words, "do I deserve this of you? But you are disappointed, and I am happy."

He then informed her, that circumstances in the political world rendered the visit to Meadowscourt, for the present, impossible; and that he was himself, as he phrased it, a gentleman at large, for lord Beaudesert was gone on a tour, and he had neither public nor private business to attend to.

Finding his company equally acceptable to both ladies, lord O'Melvyl waited on them home, where Mrs. Rainsford outdid her usual hospitality, by giving him a general and cordial invitation to her house.

Mr. Rainsford, who, like a sensible man, approved of whatever gave pleasure to his wife, confirmed it; and the lovers found themselves at once more united than ever.

Weeks flew unperceived, in a manner the most delightful to Geraldine; but it is unnecessary to be more particular, as it might not be so delightful to the reader;

the time being passed pretty much in walking, riding, and conversing with lord O'Melvyl, and then conversing, riding, and walking with him again.

During this period, Geraldine acquainted him with the sad story of her parents, and lord O'Melvyl adverted to his former intercourse with Matilda Southwell. From his first arrival in the kingdom, he had been, for obvious reasons, anxious to recommend himself to lady Louisa Southwell and her family, yet still not further than the bounds of friendship and politeness justified; for he had discovered, even as far back as the period of his first residence at Meadowscourt, how impossible it would be for a character like Matilda's ever seriously to interest him. Obliged to lady Louisa, even more than her generosity would suffer her to acknowledge, for his subsequent elevation in the scale of society, he found himself, he knew not how, on his meeting her family in Dublin, perpetually involved in a round of engagements,

ments, which threw him and Miss Southwell together; while *her* designing coquetry, *his* foreign education, and ignorance of the exact degree of attention a beautiful and fashionable female might have a right to require, united, perhaps, with the well-masked plans of her mother, to draw him into a species of entanglement, of which he did not feel the full weight, till Geraldine arrived, to eclipse every other competitor.—"You remember," he added, tenderly, "how instantly my heart declared in your favour; but the general admiration that surrounded you, the hurry of dissipation into which you plunged, and the insidious and constant attentions of *another*, led me afterwards to doubt your heart; and I asked myself if I had not better endeavour to cultivate an affection for your cousin, which seemed more likely to be rewarded. In vain; selfish, haughty, and overbearing, Matilda was incapable of a spark of disinterested attachment; and convinced that we never

 could

could be conducive to each other's happiness, I had begun to withdraw myself from the society of lady Louisa Southwell, when the eventful ball-night, and my forced departure, convinced me how dear you were, and must ever be, to me; and I could not quit Dublin, for an indefinite time, without leaving a few words of explanation, which I prevailed on your maid to convey upon your toilet."

Geraldine became *all ear*, when lord O'Melvyl came to this part of the story. —"Now, now," she internally said, "he will explain the cause of his mysterious, his unaccountable disappearance."

But O'Melvyl started away from the subject, as if frightened at his own temerity, in having advanced so near it; and turning to Geraldine, with one of his rare and insinuating smiles, observed, that as he had now been *so very frank* with her, he trusted she would, in return, admit him to her confidence; and began inquiring when last she had heard from lady Louisa,

Louisa, and in what state she had left her friends at Meadowscourt?

Geraldine felt happy to be able to reply that she was in correspondence with lady Louisa; for that lady, after her first gust of displeasure and irritation had subsided, by the removal of the object of it, had reflected, that Geraldine had certainly committed no fault which would entitle her to be the victim of marked and decided displeasure; and therefore, though she continued cold and inaccessible to the blandishments of former friendship, she occasionally wrote to her, and resumed all the observances of civility.

"I," resumed lord O'Melvyl, "receive frequent letters from my father; let me read you a paragraph in the last."

He then read part of a letter from the marquis of Beaudesert, containing the most lavish encomiums on his "distinguished choice," as he termed Geraldine, and ending with expressing his impatience to have it in his power to see her again,

when he hoped to induce her to put a speedy termination to his son's anxiety.

Geraldine listened to these effusions of esteem and friendship with tears of pleasure.—"And can I be indeed so blessed!" she cried; "and can lord Beaudesert possess so great a mind, as totally to overlook the painful circumstances——"

"He does not know them," interrupted lord O'Melvyl, unguardedly.

"What!" exclaimed Geraldine, in great surprise, "have you never communicated to him the discovery—the——"

She stopped, gasped for breath, and looked earnestly and inquiringly in his face.

"Geraldine," resumed O'Melvyl, seriously, "you do not know my father. Such an indiscretion would have ruined us."

"Then we *must* be ruined!" exclaimed Geraldine, clasping her hands together, with the vehemence of anguish. "Do

you

you think I would steal into his family under another name than——"

"Oh, we will mention that your name is Fitz-Clare, when it becomes necessary," said O'Melvyl, smiling; "but as to the rest, his curiosity must be some way diverted."

"Never!" Geraldine with energy replied.

"Dearest, gentlest, most enlightened being!" resumed O'Melvyl, with all the persuasive earnestness of passion, "do not, in my single instance, prove yourself deaf to the voice of reason. Are you not as beautiful, as well-informed, as well-born, as before I discovered you to be the daughter of—an opposer of power?"

Spite of her grief, Geraldine could scarcely forbear smiling at the cautious delicacy of this expression.

Lord O'Melvyl resumed—"Is not your family as ancient, your fortune (that I should ever advert to such a circumstance) as good? are you not, in every respect, intrinsic and adventitious, the very same? But my father would not think so, Geraldine;

dine; that extraordinary character, who in youth spurned all the lavish advantages fortune spread around him, now grasps at ambition as his only remaining stay. He is the friend, the ardent supporter, of government, I am sure, from conviction, as well as from interest. Even at this moment he is exerting himself, and with success, to procure additional honours and favours for himself and me; and that I should unite myself to a daughter of Gerald Fitz-Clare——"

"O'Melvyl," exclaimed Geraldine, impetuously, "you have pronounced our doom; for never," she added, raising her eyes to heaven, in attestation of the truth of her engagement, "never will I become your wife without the free consent *(given with full knowledge)* of the marquis of Beaudesert."

Once more, with frantic eagerness, O'Melvyl entreated her to hear him; but Geraldine besought him to leave her till she should become more composed; and he,

he, thinking, perhaps, he might plead to more advantage in a future interview, at length reluctantly acceded to her entreaty.

Relieved from his presence, Geraldine threw herself in a chair, and, for a few moments, wept uncontrollably. Soon ashamed of this weakness, she reflected on what was best to be done. To deprive herself of the society of O'Melvyl, of his sight, of his conversation, which had been her heart's nutriment so long, was painful indeed; but such a sacrifice she determined to make, should not other events prove propitious to her wishes.

It was not long before her fortitude was put to the test. The following day lord O'Melvyl returned, armed with double arguments, and more disposed than ever to treat her scruples as chimerical and vain.

Much as she dreaded the persuasive effect of his words, of his looks, of that irresistible influence, which, while present, he always exerted over her, still Geraldine's high

high sense of honour, and abhorrence of any thing like voluntary deceit, enabled her to come out triumphant from the conflict; and O'Melvyl, baffled, foiled, yet more than ever enamoured, exclaimed—"It shall be told then, since you will have it so!" After a pause he added—"There is *one* cause which may lead my father to listen to my wishes, even after this imprudent, and, I must say, unnecessary disclosure. If *that* hope fails me, you will perhaps regret; but no—your regrets will be trifling; for you never could have made this cruel condition had you been capable of a love like mine."

Half-tender, half-reproachful, were his adieus; and poor Geraldine, whose fortitude during this dialogue had been tried to the utmost, felt that even the consciousness of rectitude was scarcely sufficient to console her under the unmerited displeasure of her amiable, but too-hastily resentful lover.

In such cases the harassed soul leans for

support

support upon the approbation of a kindred spirit; and though the nature of their intercourse had been so much changed of late, Geraldine's mind instinctively reverted to the image of lady Louisa Southwell, as to the one who would appreciate and applaud a sacrifice made to honour.

In a letter, longer and less constrained than her former ones had been, Geraldine painted her difficulties, her struggles, and her final success—success, alas! against herself; and when she sent it off, experienced a calm in the idea of lady Louisa's restored good opinion: for the poet, the musician, or the artist, does not turn with more eagerness, from the unenlightened commendation of the multitude, to the discriminating praises of the connoisseur, than does the refined and delicate spirit, to meet the approval of a congenial human heart.

Time passed but dully for Miss Southwell after the above-mentioned interview with O'Melvyl. His duty now summoned

ed him frequently to the lodge in the Phœnix Park; and poor Geraldine was obliged to rejoice in any circumstance that prevented her having a fresh dispute with him, on the propriety of intermitting his very pointed and assiduous attentions while her fate remained in suspense. It was during this interval, and while her mind was disposed for any thing but gaiety, that Mrs. Rainsford mentioned that she was commissioned to pass as many tickets as she possibly could, for a concert that was to be given for the benefit of a distressed musician's family.—"There are very few great people in town," she said, "but those who are have been strenuous in their exertions on this occasion; so it would be quite fashionable and proper for us, Miss Southwell, to go, and would, besides, be doing a real act of charity."

As Geraldine, though indifferent to amusement herself, was too good-natured to make any opposition to that of others, the

the party was soon arranged, and, in the evening, the carriage conveyed them from the Black Rock to the street in Dublin where the performance took place. The first act was nearly over when Geraldine and her *chaperon* entered — a circumstance which highly delighted Mrs. Rainsford, it appeared "*so very stylish!*"

They had not been accommodated many minutes when Miss Southwell was induced to turn round, by feeling a part of her drapery suddenly and somewhat forcibly pulled from behind her.

At the same moment she was reassured, by a very soft voice, saying, in the accents of civility, tempered by a sweet and mellow *southern brogue*—" Don't be afear'd, ma'am; I put the tail of my coat between my fut and your coat."

Looking at the smiling speaker, Geraldine saw the widow of the antiquary, Mr. O'Carolan, a lady of whose epistolary talents we have already presented a specimen to our readers. Her language was no

no less original, and required exactly what she possessed—uncommon beauty, to make her conversation tolerated. But had not the widow O'Carolan been, as she really was, one of the prettiest women in Ireland, to Geraldine she would have appeared so, for *with her* returned the remembrance of home and of Meadowscourt; and the persons who have recently seen or been visited by those we love, seem, to the eye of affection, invested with a part of their attractions.

The conversation began by Geraldine's good-humouredly assuring the lady that she had caused no inconvenience to her; and Mrs. O'Carolan, who sat on the bench just above her, had indeed, as she said, before she indulged in the convenience of resting her foot on the seat next her, provided against any possible mischief from its contact with an elegant dress, by inserting part of a most unfashionably-long train between herself and Geraldine. Soon the widow attracted the greatest part of

our

our heroine's attention, by mentioning that she had passed some part of her time at sir Charles Southwell's; and as much as they could, between the intervals of the music, they became engaged in a whispered conversation about their mutual friends at Meadowscourt. Geraldine asked Mrs. O'Carolan how she liked the period she had spent on a visit there?

"Why, pretty well—pretty well, indeed, ma'am. Lady Louisa, to be sure, was a good deal taken up writing of letters, and fidgetting, and fretting, and watching the post; and Miss Southwell, I believe, is a *consated* sort of body; but Miss O'Reilly was exceedingly affable and obliging; and sir Charles!—oh! it's sir Charles Southwell himself has won my warm heart! Pity he isn't matched to a sweeter-tempered lady; for I don't know how it was, the more civil and polite he was, the more stiff and *contrary* my lady grew, and didn't seem to half-like me; yet sir Charles never paid me a compliment

pliment but one, and that was in his mild, whispering way. 'Mrs. O'Carolan,' says he, 'youth and beauty like yours'—yes, that was the word—'youth and beauty, like yours, was not made to mourn for ever.' Poor man! he little knew my heart. But it's aisy to put him off, for he's not like your lounging, saucy, staring beaux, that you can see, at the first look, has a design on you; but, to the *contrary*, so proper, and polite, and respectful, and insinuating!"

Geraldine sighed, for Mrs. O'Carolan had, unconsciously, hit upon the exact word that described sir Charles Southwell's usual mode of attack. To divert the conversation from a disagreeable subject, she asked her companion what she thought of the performance, which was, in fact, contemptible enough.

Mrs. O'Carolan, who did not exactly know how much a young lady of Miss Geraldine Southwell's acknowledged taste *would expect* her to be delighted, replied, with

with a look and accent of rapture, that she was "beatified;" and immediately added, in a still more sentimental tone— "For, as my dear dead antiquity used to say, 'there's not a greater trate to the olfactory organs than a well-executed consort of instrumental singing.' But what's that *she's* beginning about now?" continued the lady, designated in the concert-bill an Italian air, the words of which she could not understand.

Geraldine explained to her that it was a recitative and aria in the character of Dido; and with a few more explanations, Mrs. O'Carolan was enabled to make her own remarks.—"Well done, Dowdy! Dowdy is it?—No, Dido. Though you are but a *slieveen* sort of a looking queen after all, with your hair *streeling*, it's plain enough you're crossed in love." She now turned to Geraldine for further explanation.

The singer was come to some lines in which she reproached herself for forgetting

ting her first contract, and invoked the injured shade of her husband Sichæus.—"So you want to have him back again, d'ye?—oh! that indeed! I'm glad you've the dacency to be ashamed of yourself for forgetting poor Sykes. Constant to *Ænaas!* no, no, never tell me that! them that marries twice would marry a hundred times, say I, as I told Mr. Stratford Gore when he lost his dear lady."

"Mrs. Gore! is she dead?" exclaimed Mrs. Rainsford, turning round to join in the conversation; for Mrs. Stratford Gore had been one of those stars of fashion to which Mrs. Rainsford had looked up, the preceding winter, in humble admiration.

"Bless me!" cried Mrs. O'Carolan, "didn't you know that Mr. Stratford Gore had buried his wife?" And then, one lady being equally desirous to have a hearer as the other was to become a listener, she entered into a particular detail of the circumstances of Mrs. Gore's illness, which originated in a cold she caught, while

while imprudently exposing herself to the night-air, in pursuance of some of her poetical abstractions.—"She said she caught it planning an invitation to Vesperus: now who Vesperus was I never could learn; but I know it's not worth catching one's death of cold for the best man that ever wore a head—now is it, Mrs. Rainsford? And so I told Mr. Gore, who's not quite inconsolable; and they do say ——"

Here Mrs. O'Carolan was proceeding to have communicated a very important piece of intelligence, but it was totally put out of her head by the sudden approach of a very splendid-looking stranger, and Geraldine was doomed not to hear what "*they did say*" till a considerable time afterwards.

The striking personage who had joined their party was no other than lord O'Melvyl. In a low voice, he bitterly lamented to Geraldine his not being released to attend her sooner, and advised her, as there would

would probably be some difficulty in getting out at the end, to induce Mrs. Rainsford to think of departure. The lady readily took the hint, and the widow O'Carolan whipt her shawl off the bench, and prepared to go out with them.

Several parties were beginning to move. There was a difficulty in passing over some benches that were awkwardly placed as they went out of the concert-room. Lord O'Melvyl offered his assistance to the fair widow.—" No, sir, take care of Miss Southwell, who seems frightened," she replied; " I'll *slidder* down well enough by myself."

" Where did you pick up that *Belle Sauvage?*" said lord O'Melvyl, in a whisper, to Geraldine.

Before she was able to reply, his lordship had gone, at the request of Mrs. Rainsford (very proud of such a *cavaliere servente)*, to gain tidings of her carriage.

While waiting his return, the three ladies took possession of a recess in a waiting-

ing-room, whence they could see and hear, without being observed, by a very fashionable *partie quarrée,* consisting of lady James Stawell, lady Kilcrest, captain Vane, and counsellor MacCalembourg. The appearance, together, of two young women so eminently beautiful as Geraldine Southwell and Mrs. O'Carolan, the one so graceful, the other so vulgar in her manners, united to the showy decorations of Mrs. Rainsford, dressed in the extreme, or rather beyond the extreme of the fashion, were circumstances that could not be overlooked, at a place and in a season which afforded so little either of interest or amusement. The unmarried lady, the wife, and the fair widow, and her handsome mourning, came in for an almost equal share of criticism.—"Impossible!" exclaimed lady James, staring and arching her brows with a look of supercilious contempt; "could that be Miss Geraldine Southwell? Who upon earth was the

 Chickesaw,

Chickesaw, in black and bugles, she had with her?"

"Never saw her anywhere," replied captain Vane; "but whoever she is, she's a devilish fine woman, 'pon honour!"

"Upon my word," observed lady Kilcrest, "the trio seemed *fort bien assortie!* Geraldine Southwell was rather admired last winter, but——"

"Admired!" repeated the counsellor; "why she was the rage!"

"She always wanted air," said lady Kilcrest.

"And manner," added lady James.

Counsellor MacCalembourg lifted up his hands and eyes with an air of ludicrous mock despair.—"I should never have expected this of your ladyship! Three little months, 'or e'er those shoes were old,' with which she danced at lady James Stawell's quadrille parties. Poor Miss Geraldine Southwell!"

"You mistake me," replied her ladyship,

ship, colouring, "I never denied that Miss Southwell was very amiable, and that I had an infinite regard for her; and I should certainly call on her some day now, only that she lives at such a distance."

Now lady James took an airing to the Black Rock every day; but this *soit dit en passant.*

"Miss Southwell was certainly very handsome," said captain Vane, with the decided air of a connoisseur, "and possessed talent of every description."

"Oh!" said the counsellor, "you would allude to her music, and her reading of Shakespeare, and her statuary! I never hear of those performances without thinking of the Russian consul's wife, who was here a few years ago, and who, whenever she received any civilities at a house, used to promise a Hebe, a Psyché, or some other 'goddess made of clay,' of her modelling, in return. This answered very well, till some one made the unlucky observation, that madame Nishkirvan ac-

 cepted

cepted our Irish hospitality, and repaid us with a handful of mud out of Stephen's Green."

"Pray," asked lady Kilcrest, "did you ever hear exactly who that Miss Southwell was?"

"That is more than I can answer you," replied lady James, "although I was so intimate with Matilda Southwell. All I know is, she was a Miss Southwell, whom lady Louisa chose to patronize."

A malignant smile was visible on the countenances of some of her ladyship's auditors. Captain Vane now asked Mr. MacCalembourg if he had remarked the beautiful widow Kirkpatrick, and if the diamonds she sported that night were not superb?

"Superb indeed!" repeated lady Kilcrest; "and very necessary it is to make amends, by the oriental magnificence of ugly shawls and gold muslins, for a peahen's voice, and a truly oriental complexion."

"You

"You are severe, lady Kilcrest," resumed the captain; "the lovely Begum, *la belle Kirkpatrick*, is universally admired, and she'll be the rage, I prophesy; more than even the Southwell was last winter."

The approach of lord O'Melvyl to announce to the ladies the carriage was ready, prevented Miss Southwell from hearing any more of this conversation. How it had opened her eyes! Instead of repelling, she had eagerly rushed forward to meet the world's illusions, and had imagined, with the self-flattery to which affectionate tempers are peculiarly liable, that wherever she was courted she was beloved. Geraldine was now undeceived, and this lesson, rather severe at the moment, had a most beneficial effect in forming her future character.

Mrs. Rainsford offered to set down Mrs. O'Carolan, as her lodgings lay in their way home—an offer which Mrs. O'Carolan gratefully accepted.

 Lord

Lord O'Melvyl, as he handed Miss Southwell to the carriage, whispered—"My father is returned—I preferred speaking to writing to him. I have good hopes; but whatever his final determination may be, *mine* must remain unalterable."

Tenderly pressing her hand, he withdrew, leaving Geraldine penetrated with the most delightful sentiments of grateful attachment. From these she mentally reverted to the scene she just had witnessed.—"All happiness attend my successor!" thought Geraldine; "may Mrs. Kirkpatrick enjoy, in its plenitude, while it lasts, every pleasure attendant upon being the rage! Oh, vain, deceitful world! for whose applause thy votaries toil so hard, what are thy highest rewards, compared to one *heartfelt* pleasure?—not worthy to be exchanged with one glance of that eye—one accent of that dear voice, which assure me of the sincerity of a heart equally tender and faithful!"

CHAP-

CHAPTER II.

> And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
> Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
> I still had hopes—my long vexations past—
> Here to return, and die at home at last.
>
> GOLDSMITH.

TIME passed on, with little to vary its course for Geraldine, except the occasional letters of lady Louisa Southwell and visits of lord O'Melvyl. He owned that he found great difficulties with his father, whose viclent prejudices struggled against the love—nay, the gratitude, he had formerly borne to Geraldine. O'Melvyl still continued to flatter himself that the former sentiment would become triumphant; and when forced to acknowledge he had been too sanguine, his manner of expressing himself excited great surprise in Ge-

 raldine,

raldine, for it was always as if lord Beaudesert refused him something he had scarcely a *right* to deny.

Though unwilling, while his spirits were in this state of irritation, wholly to deprive him of the pleasure of her society, Miss Southwell at length succeeded in convincing him of the propriety of desisting, at least for the present, from such pointed assiduities as must make her the object of disagreeable remark or animadversion to every individual in the house; and these restrictions she contrived to blend with a tenderness so true—a manner so endearing, that O'Melvyl, every day more enraptured with her attractions, hardly knew whether it was to her sweetness or severity she was most indebted for her power of pleasing. Mrs. Rainsford had returned to town, for Dublin had begun to fill again.

Weary, at length, of the restraints imposed on him—weary of vainly combating the opinion of his father, lord O'Melvyl, at

at length, told Geraldine that he did not conceive a son, who had known so little in his lifetime of a parent's care and affection, was bound to sacrifice to that parent all his hopes of happiness.—"I have complied with your fatal scruple, Geraldine," he said. "I afterwards deferred to his opinion, so far as to allow him time to consider, in every point of view, a question so dearly interesting to my happiness. Filial duty can require no more; nor can you love me, as I once fondly believed you did, if you persist in sacrificing me to an idle and frivolous punctilio." Here he paused, but the expression of his countenance said more than a thousand arguments. In it Geraldine read that determined spirit which love could soften, but never totally subdue.

She saw her fate was drawing to a crisis, and that the moment was perhaps come, when she must yield up somewhat of her fondly-cherished loftiness of principle, or see a lover, *as* fondly cherished, estranged

from her for ever. Disguising the anguish and perturbation of her spirits under an assumed smile of mingled softness and gaiety—"It is not, dear O'Melvyl, that I love you less, but that I love honour more," she began, when the entrance of a servant, with a note for Miss Southwell, effectually put a period to the conversation.

Geraldine never could have believed that she would have been so glad of any circumstance which interrupted a conference between herself and lord O'Melvyl. Opening the note, with a degree of hurry and trepidation that were more affected than sincere, she appeared entirely absorbed in reading it. But soon this assumed interest was changed into real surprise and emotion, for the contents of the note were as follows:—

"DEAR GERALDINE,

"I arrived in town late last night, and am impatient to see you If

I thought

I thought you required a bait to lure you, I might declare, in newspaper style, that 'you will hear of something to your advantage;' but I know your disposition too well to imagine such a bribe necessary to induce you to hasten to

"Your earliest, latest friend,
"LOUISA SOUTHWELL."

Trembling, blushing, and flurried with joyful agitation, Geraldine put the billet into the hands of lord O'Melvyl. The lovers were equally at a loss to guess to what it might allude, but read in each other's eyes that *each* hoped it might be something to the interest of their love.

O'Melvyl was vehement in urging her to go. Not a word more was said on the subject of their preceding conversation; and in a quarter of an hour after the receipt of this billet, Geraldine was in the arms of her restored friend and protectress.

So many mingled motives forced tears both from the eyes of Geraldine and lady Louisa at this meeting, that she did not at first remark the improved air of cheerfulness which pervaded the countenances of the rest of the family. Matilda welcomed her almost with cordiality, and looked, as she always did when in good-humour, extremely handsome. Miss O'Reilly was all radiant with joy.

After the first greetings were over, lady Louisa, taking Geraldine with her into her dressing-room, and locking the door, to prevent any other intruder, said, with a mysterious smile—"It is no longer a secret—of course the day is fixed. My messenger has been telling Dillon, that, ere you could attend to my note, you were obliged to be summoned from a conference with lord O'Melvyl."

"It is true, dear madam," answered Geraldine, blushing, yet reassured, by observing that in these gay reproaches there lurked none of that latent displeasure with which

which lady Louisa had formerly observed lord O'Melvyl's attention.—"It is true that I was engaged conversing with O'Melvyl, but on a far different subject from that you imagine."

She then related to lady Louisa the circumstances of her present situation, and the embarrassment in which she found herself, from the impetuosity of lord O'Melvyl.

"Why this, my dearest Geraldine," observed her ladyship, laughing, "is a pretty little entanglement—a delicate distress and embarrassment, entirely of your own seeking. *I* have long acknowledged the futility of opposing the bent of inclination. Matilda, as you see, is tolerably reconciled to her lot; for, to let you into a secret that every body knows, O'Melvyl has at length found a successor in your rejected swain, lord Templemore; so what upon earth retards *your* coming to a conclusion also?"

"Lord Beaudesert's determined opposition," answered Geraldine.

"Of

"Of that I warned you long ago, and you made but light of it," resumed her ladyship.

"Oh, madam, I confess my error!" Geraldine replied. "Young, presumptuous, inexperienced, I judged all hearts by my own and yours. I was even vain enough to imagine that the interest I had already made with lord Beaudesert upon my own account——"

"Would outweigh all the political delinquencies of your unfortunate father. So, child, you are come at last, like all people who begin life in the clouds, to see the world as it is, and to acknowledge the advantage of experience."

Geraldine thought this cruel; but, so lately quite restored to her ladyship's favour, determined not to recommence a quarrel.

"No," resumed lady Louisa, thoughtfully—"no talents, no graces, no charms in the daughter, could reconcile a man like lord Beaudesert to such an alliance."

Geraldine

Geraldine sighed, in mournful acquiescence.

"But if," continued lady Louisa, "that bar could be removed——"

"Ah, madam," interrupted Geraldine, earnestly, "do not imagine me so far gone as to 'wish impossibilities!'"

"Pardon me—nothing is impossible to well-directed talent and spirit. Other misguided gentlemen have been pardoned, and why should not Gerald Fitz-Clare? and if no longer proscribed——"

"Dear—dearest lady Louisa! I conjure you, tempt me no more with the idea; I cannot—indeed I cannot bear the sad reverse—the——"

"You cannot bear even the idea of your father's being recalled to society! then how would you endure the reality? How would you endure the possibility that he might be at length restored to friends, to fame, and fortune—nay, that within a short time he might actually hold his ever-loved daughter in his arms?"

Though

Though dimly and dubiously, Geraldine began now to apprehend something of lady Louisa's meaning. Her breath came thick, her eyes almost lost the power of distinguishing, and she could scarcely preserve herself from fainting, when lady Louisa held up to her astonished sight the signed instrument that pronounced the recall and pardon of Gerald Southwell Fitz-Clare!—"And this is your work!" she exclaimed, as soon as she found breath to speak; and then throwing herself on lady Louisa's bosom, relieved her full heart, by shedding a torrent of tears.

When a little recovered, her ladyship tried to smile away her emotion,—"My work!" she gaily repeated. "I desire such a word may never stray beyond the sacred precincts of this boudoir. Why you would make me the queen of *intriguantes*, and ascribe to me effects far beyond my feeble powers to accomplish. No, no, dear girl! it is the work of persons far abler to confer benefits than I am.

I set

I set before them the many—many mitigating circumstances in your father's case. A favourable conjuncture happened to present itself; sir Charles Southwell had it in his power to benefit a friend of administration, in return for any obligation conferred on another branch of his family. *I* recalled to memory the distant period at which the offence was committed, and the improbability that lenity, at this juncture, could be productive of evil consequences. This is *all* I did, and for the rest——"

"But when—what—how?" interrupted the blessed but bewildered Geraldine; "you must not attempt to disguise from me, my dearest benefactress, how much I am obliged to you."

"*Basta*, I shall not indulge you in particulars; but remember the noble letter you wrote me from the Black Rock, descriptive of your determination to act with frankness, in spite of the opposition of O'Melvyl. Remember I owed you some

little

little reparation for our *bouderie* at Meadowscourt, and be satisfied."

Too happy to be gay, Geraldine, though pressed to spend the remainder of the day with lady Louisa, after a long and delightful conversation, requested to be excused from joining the general circle, as she feared not to be able to command that serenity of spirits necessary for her appearance there.

Lady Louisa readily accepted her excuse, and they parted, with a mutual promise on the morrow to meet again.

Consigned to the solitude of her pillow, Geraldine at length had leisure to reflect and be happy. To be restored to a father —to a name—to O'Melvyl! Her heart overflowed with gratitude to the Giver of all good, as she *now* contemplated *in one view*, and *now* numbered over, in *detail*, how many blessings she had reason to be thankful for. But as *that* heart must always have something to sigh for, she at length

length fell asleep, exclaiming—"How many tedious weeks must intervene be fore I can embrace my father!"

CHAPTER III.

Oh! bless'd are the lovers and friends who shall live
The days of thy glory to see! MOORE.

. . . .

Smile on thy green hills—Erin, smile!
Thy woes—thy wars, shall cease;
An angel to thy troubled isle
Bears concord, joy, and peace.
HON. W. R SPENCER.

I PASS over the interval between the recall and the return of Gerald Fitz-Clare, merely observing, that it was marked by the permitted renewal of every attention on the part of lord O'Melvyl, who, while gazing with triumphant rapture on the beauties of his destined bride, exclaimed —"Surely,

—"Surely, surely my father *now* can no longer withhold his consent!"

Meanwhile his mistress tormented herself with imagining every possible vicissitude by which people, endued with a lively fancy, pay the penalty for those fairy treasures with which that faculty frequently endows them. Her father was no longer an exile, it was true; but was it certain he would not continue a voluntary one? Had he formed any new connexions unknown to her or lady Louisa? Perhaps he had lived among persons who had fostered and increased every principle that was erroneous in his early life. He might set himself vehemently against lord Beaudesert and lord O'Melvyl as courtiers. Every day she might have the misery of seeing her father more inimical to her happiness than ever lady Louisa Southwell had been. She might—in short, she quite bewildered herself in a maze of conjectures respecting this unknown father; and as the time approached when she could

could begin to calculate, by days, the period of his arrival, her agitation arose to a degree of feverish and nervous height, that far more resembled pain than pleasure.

At lady Louisa's request, Geraldine had resumed her old quarters at *her* house, though she still kept up a friendly intimacy by visits with Mrs. Rainsford.

At length a letter arrived, announcing that Mr. Fitz-Clare was in Ireland, and lady Louisa had to inform the trembling Geraldine that she might, in two or three days at farthest, expect to see her father.

The formidable day arrived, and lady Louisa had taken care it should be an uninterrupted one. At the moment the long-expected stranger was announced, her ladyship was sitting with only her two daughters, as she now fondly called them, in the little dressing-room. The door opened, and she welcomed the stranger by his name—welcomed once more to his long-resigned native home the exiled Southwell Fitz-Clare.—"Your daughter," she

she added, but, overcome by contending emotions, was unable to point out to him *which* was his daughter; and hiding her face in her handkerchief, sunk upon the sofa, giving way to a flood of tears.

Fitz-Clare's eye glanced quickly from Matilda to Geraldine; though *both* beautiful, it was evident he would have been disappointed had the *former* proved to be his daughter; but the first glance at Geraldine's expressive face was sufficient to convince him *which* was the child he had been forced to abandon.—"You—*you* are the daughter of Isabel!" in a smothered voice he exclaimed, and rushed forward to meet her anticipated embrace.

When all parties were a little recovered, lady Louisa was the best able to support the conversation. Geraldine contemplated in silence the object of so many secret wishes, and listened, in breathless anxiety, to the sentiments that issued from his lips.

The first moment he struck her view dissipated many vague apprehensions that she

she had, till now, almost unconsciously entertained.

Whatever imagination has pictured as venerable and majestic in an ancient Irish king, was realized in the noble aspect of Gerald Fitz-Clare. He looked older than his years; but it was evidently care and a mild thoughtfulness, not guilt or intemperance, that had imprinted those furrows on his brow. His conversation completed the impression his appearance had begun.

His was one of those rare spirits which misfortune ameliorates, instead of souring; all his faults indeed had proceeded from a misguided enthusiasm and an exalted imagination; and in the solitude of his subsequent retirement, to return to virtue was to return to himself. Of *him* it might indeed be said—

> "His heart was *formed* for softness—*warped* to wrong—
> Betrayed too early, and beguiled too long."

The pride of imputed talent, the flattery of evil counsellors, and the desire of being

being supposed to think with originality, had been his ruin; but the guilt into which those errors had plunged him, severely as it had been visited, had by none been judged so severely as, in his maturer years, by Gerald Fitz-Clare himself.

During his exile, philosophy had been his consolation, but it was philosophy enlightened by religion; and while *both* taught him to acquiesce in his hard fate, they served but to present the heinousness of his errors in still more lively colours to his view. His character inspired Geraldine with respect; but when drawing her near him, he tearfully retraced her resemblance to that mother whose place in his heart had never been filled up. When he listened, delighted, to the encomiums her maternal protectress passed upon her merits, and seemed to experience a revival of youth, on hearing his beloved Geraldine was likely to be placed in a situation equal to her highest deserts and wishes, love was added to the respect she felt for him,

him, and she experienced the most lively desire of contributing to the happiness of so good a father.

Though Mr. Fitz-Clare staid a few days in town, in compliment to sir Charles and lady Louisa Southwell, it was evident he longed for the privacy and retirement of the country. He could not be prevailed on to enter into any society, or appear in any place of public amusement; and except to lord O'Melvyl, with whom he expressed himself highly pleased, and lord Beaudesert, whose "hard consent" had at length been won, he declined being presented to any body.

The day was fixed that Geraldine was to accompany him to his seat in the county of Wexford, and she anticipated, with a mixture of youthful delight and awe, the idea of visiting, with her father, those domains of which he had imagined himself deprived for ever.

With what mingled feelings did Gerald Fitz-Clare, after such a lengthened ba-

 nishment,

nishment, prepare to revisit the abodes of his forefathers! but *here* his daughter flattered herself he was most likely to regain that peace of mind of which cruel retrospections robbed him, and here she expected her own fate to be fixed; for lord O'Melvyl was to follow her to those shades, and there to receive her vows.

Here I might describe the gloomy appearance of the vast, long-deserted mansion; the exclamations of mingled grief and joy of Katherine Lawless, who had followed her old master into the country; and the fine field that the irregular magnificence of the park and grounds seemed to promise for the future exercise of Geraldine's taste: but "'tis mine to tell an onward tale;" and those trifling particulars, that may be very well at the commencement of the action, are absolutely tiresome and provoking when the curtain is about to fall, and the principal characters have grouped themselves in front of the stage.

One

One great amusement to Mr. Fitz-Clare was, to point out to his daughter's notice every striking object in their demesne and neighbourhood; another of his pleasures was, to hear her voice and taste exerted on those native strains which he had long despaired ever to hear in his own country again: but this, both from the resemblance her voice bore to that of her adored mother, and the heart-wringing recollections our national melodies are so painfully calculated to excite, was an overcoming pleasure, and the only one in which the duteous Geraldine was ever unwilling to indulge him. She saw, with the deepest regret, that her father was not happy—that all her attentions were insufficient to make him so; in this frame of mind she gladly welcomed a letter from lord O'Melvyl, announcing that he was hastening to her, and in her answer expressed the reviving confidence she experienced in the cheering addition of his society.—"Come, dear O'Melvyl," she said; "and may your

presence be the means of dissipating the cloud that now hangs on my father's brow! Nothing will then be wanting to my happiness."

On the evening of the day that lord O'Melvyl was expected, Geraldine was singing, for her father, some of those touching native airs in which he took such a dangerous delight; she accompanied them with that simple harp which we have already once described. Fitz-Clare had pointed out the song, and she was obliged to give utterance to the strain.

> "Yes, weep; and however my foes may condemn,
> THY tears shall efface their decree;
> For Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
> I have been but too faithful to thee."

Fitz-Clare had overrated his own firmness in selecting these dangerous words; all the past rolled back, tinged in blood and tears, and presented his wasted life in saddest colours to his view. He hastily turned from the book, reclined his head on Geraldine's shoulder, and giving vent to

to the uncontrollable emotions of the moment, sobbed audibly.

"My dear father," said Geraldine, rising, in great agitation, "you should shun these subjects; they destroy you. Too fatally they recall the brave but fruitless struggle."

"No flattery," replied Fitz-Clare, recovering himself, and in a solemn tone. "Geraldine, it was the madness of the hour. Meaning to be my country's friend, I joined her bitterest foes. The idea of separating Ireland from her sister country, to place her under the jurisdiction of France, if it had not been wicked, was preposterous and foolish in the extreme. No, my child!" he continued, relapsing into softness and feeling; "far be it from me to represent myself as an injured victim—a martyr in the cause of liberty! Long, long have I stood self-condemned; but when the time shall come that I shall be no more—when, as our touching bard expresses it, I have 'left but the *name* of

my fault and my sorrow,' then, only then, can I hope for pardon from myself, the world, and Heaven—then, my beloved child, *you* will live to happiness, and *I* shall have found repose."

Much agitated, he quitted the room.

His daughter soon afterwards saw him walking, with rapid and hurried strides, in the dismal yew plantation that adjoined to the shrubbery. She experienced a strong desire to follow him, but, in his present disposition of mind, durst not attempt it.

Oppressed with an indescribable sensation of wretchedness, such as she had never known since her final *éclaircissement* with O'Melvyl, Geraldine sent for her faithful Lawless to bear her company; and Katherine soon succeeded in relieving her mind, by cheerful anticipations of the future, and interesting stories of the old mansion and its former inhabitants.

How often, when the heart is oppressed with solicitude or sorrow, do the most cultivated

cultivated and refined thus prefer, to the comparatively heartless fellowship of e-quals, the warm, though untutored sympathy of one of those unknown, domestic, humble friends!

When the hour arrived that Mr. Fitz-Clare usually took some refreshment, and still he was not returned, his daughter began to be seriously alarmed. She sent a servant in quest of him, who returned with the information that he was no where to be found.

More and more anxious, Geraldine now dispatched messengers in every direction.

After a period of agonizing suspense, she was obliged to conclude their search had been equally fruitless. She was opposing the arguments of Lawless, who was urging her to take some rest, when the sound of voices below interrupted the useless contest; and she soon distinguished the tones of *one* which at all times would have had nearly power to recall her from the arms of death. The next mo-

ment, without preparation, almost without knowing how it had happened, she found herself in the beloved presence of O'Melvyl; but, for the first time, *his* presence failed to cheer her.

Pale, agitated, and almost overcome by his emotions, it was but too evident he had some dreadful tidings to convey.—"Support yourself, my adored Geraldine," he began, turning on her a look of unutterable tenderness and compassion; "for your own sake, but still more for *mine*, exert the powers of that unequalled understanding to bear up against the communication I have to make you."

Lord O'Melvyl then briefly stated, that he had set out on his journey for Mr. Fitz-Clare's at the time he at first proposed, and was within little more than a mile of the place of his destination, when, on passing by a wild common, he was induced to turn from his road, by the sight of two men, who had evidently been engaged in a mortal quarrel. One of them

was

was lying wounded on the ground; the other still held in his hand the weapon with which he had committed the murderous deed.

Lord O'Melvyl's people found, upon inquiry, that the suffering gentleman believed himself mortally wounded; the other, upon the approach of strangers, had precipitately fled.

O'Melvyl immediately alighted from his carriage, in which, after having bound up his wound, as well as the exigence of the moment would permit, they placed the dying man; but what were the feelings of Geraldine's lover, on discovering the unfortunate sufferer to be Fitz-Clare!

Geraldine listened thus far, in painful silence, to lord O'Melvyl, and then interrupted him, to ask, in a voice scarcely audible, if she should not soon see her father?

"The carriage is proceeding as fast as his situation will admit," lord O'Melvyl replied; "and I rode on, in the design in

which I have succeeded, of being the first to prepare you for this distressing event."

Their conference was here interrupted by a sudden shriek—a yell, so wild and terrible, that it thrilled the ear and heart. Her eyes glaring, and almost bursting from their sockets, Katherine Lawless rushed into the room.—"Oh, he's dead! the master's dead!" she cried; "and it's Knowlan's hand that did it. I knew it —I knew it! They that strike with the sword shall perish by the sword!"

Rendered almost frantic by grief, horror, and latent remorse, the wretched old woman, unconscious of what she did, unmindful even of the sufferings of Geraldine, usually her first object, continued to run up and down, wringing her hands, and repeating, with mechanical and fearful rapidity—"I knew it! I knew it! They that smite with the sword must perish by the sword!"

O'Melvyl soon discovered the cause of this disturbance. The carriage which conveyed

veyed home the unfortunate Fitz-Clare had driven up to the house rather sooner than the inhabitants had calculated. Katherine put herself forward, and was the first person that appeared at the door.

During the short period of the drive, Fitz-Clare's wound had opened; and this faithful follower saw, by the glare of the torches that flashed in the face of the dying man, that the carriage was filled with blood. Horrorstruck, she fled into the mansion, and, from the excess of the feelings which overpowered her, was reduced to a total helplessness and inability to administer assistance.

Surgical aid was immediately procured, and Fitz-Clare, by strong restoratives, revived to the sensibility of pain; but no hopes were given of his life, and the gentlemen called in declared it their opinion, that he would probably not pass over the night.

Fitz-Clare insisted on being informed of the truth, and, on learning that his life

was certainly in danger, calmly observed —"In that case it matters little that I should forego an hour's repose, in order to make an exertion which will materially relieve my mind."

In spite of all opposition, he had his daughter and lord O'Melvyl called to him. His object was to explain to them the circumstances which had brought on the fatal catastrophe, that they might not imagine he had rashly and needlessly thrown away a life to which so many blessings had been restored.

Pursued by painful thoughts, which succeeded to his melancholy conversation with Geraldine, Fitz-Clare had sought to calm his mind, by prolonging and extending his evening-walk; when he met, unexpectedly, the wretch we have repeatedly had occasion to mention—Knowlan. Though conscious he was Fitz-Clare's original betrayer, this man had the effrontery to remind him of their former intimacy, and congratulated him, in terms the most likely

likely to be offensive to the feelings of Fitz-Clare, on the fortunate change in his situation.

Determined, if possible, to overlook the behaviour of one driven almost to insanity, by the united force of guilt and desperation, Fitz-Clare only endeavoured to shake off his troublesome companion; but Knowlan was determined not to quit him, till he had worked him up to his truly-diabolical purpose. Fitz-Clare, restored to public consideration—to private happiness, was a sight truly insupportable to his envious and vindictive spirit, and he was bent upon provoking him to rush upon his own destruction.

Knowlan was but too successful; he made use of some expressions which it was impossible for the high spirit of Gerald to overlook.

Fitz-Clare had long been in the habit of going out armed—Knowlan was always so; he bade him defend himself; they fought—and the noble-minded, the generous

rous Fitz-Clare received his enemy's fatal fire in his bosom.

After Mr. Fitz-Clare had indulged himself in this clear, though painful statement, lord O'Melvyl urged him to permit them to retire.

"Cruel!" exclaimed Gerald Fitz-Clare, with affecting energy, "to deprive me of my Geraldine—my long-lost child's sweet company, one of the poor moments I have yet to live!"

He however yielded up the point, and soon afterwards obtained some repose.

Refreshed by this sleep, he awoke, sensible and collected, and desired to see a clergyman, who was arrived from a short distance. After some time spent in self-examination and the duties of religion, he sent again for Geraldine and lord O'Melvyl to come to him.

Fitz-Clare was now sitting up, supported by pillows, and contemplating, with his dying eyes, that native domain to which he had so lately returned—from which

which he was to part, in a few hours, for ever. He seemed fully sensible of, and thankful for, the blessings yet accorded him. To be allowed to breathe his last in that cherished land for which he had tempted and endured so much—to see those he most valued, with duteous zeal, surrounding him, visited his fleeting spirit with a transient gleam of joy.

Geraldine and lord O'Melvyl had now, on each side, encircled him with one supporting arm. Fitz-Clare looked on each by turns, then, fixing his gaze on Geraldine—"Light of my eyes!" he exclaimed, "my lovely, duteous darling! the sting of death is removed, in thinking I consign you to the protection of this noble-minded, this amiable young man!"

He paused, and gasped for breath, as if even these few words had cost him extreme effort. Then collecting, as it were, his latest force, and directing his fondest, most earnest gaze towards his native mountains, now just illuminated with the

rays

rays of a rising sun—"And thou, my country!" he continued, "first, latest object of my hope and love! may these, my children, live to see thee happy—to see thy woes redressed—thy welfare guarded—thy blessings multiplied, by friends more enlightened—not, oh, not more sincere, than *I* was!"

CHAPTER IV.

> "The storm abates at every gust it blows;
> Past ills enhance the comfort of repose;
> He who ne'er felt the pressure of distress,
> Ne'er felt returning pleasure's keen excess."

THUS perished, in the prime of life, Gerald Fitz-Clare. Earth, that received his ashes, "bears not alive a braver gentleman;" nor was there, originally, a character in which nature had blended more happily tenderness with fire.

Upon

Upon hearing of these dreadful tidings, lady Louisa Southwell hastened to the house of mourning, and would have hurried Geraldine away; but she resisted all entreaties to quit it, till the last sad duties had been performed to her father's remains. Lady Louisa felt deeply distressed, in consequence of the turn events had taken; she now sometimes reproached herself for having been instrumental in Fitz-Clare's recall; she also reflected, with bitterness, that the marquis of Beaudesert had given, after all, but a cold and forced consent to his son's union with Fitz-Clare's daughter. Such, and so questionable, is the good a female effects, however intelligent her mind, however benevolent her motives, the moment she steps beyond her allotted sphere of action.

The ruling passion soon returning, lady Louisa Southwell bent all her zeal to discover the murderer of Fitz-Clare. Though he had escaped at the moment, she declared that the utmost ends of the earth should

should not hide him from the persevering pursuits of the family he had so irreparably injured. . .

The event justified this declaration. Knowlan at length was taken; and though it is anticipating on the order of time, we here commemorate his fate, to have done with the painful subject. The testimony of lord O'Melvyl and his attendants was too decisive to admit, in his judges, the smallest hesitation with respect to his guilt; and the unhappy man at length paid the forfeit, with his life, of his numerous crimes committed both against private friendship and against society.

The situation of Geraldine's mind, for some time after her father's death, was truly such as to inspire compassion. The manner in which Fitz-Clare met his fate greatly added to the severity of her affliction.—"Oh, my forebodings did not deceive me!" she would say, in allusion to the shock she had twice received from the wild, fiendish aspect of Knowlan. "It

was

was not only his being a villain, a ruffian, that filled me with such involuntary horror at his sight—it was that I beheld, *in that dreadful countenance,* the destined murderer of my father."

To banish these superstitious ideas, which prevented her mind from regaining any degree of strength, lady Louisa left Geraldine as little as possible to herself, and lord O'Melvyl also spent every hour he could possibly command with her. The store of latent tenderness which O'Melvyl's heart possessed, when thus called into action, disclosed itself in a thousand soothing and delicate attentions, that rendered him dearer to the suffering Geraldine than ever.

Lord O'Melvyl was summoned from this office of consoler, which he performed so well, to attend himself the dying bed of a parent. Lord Beaudesert, whose life had been one scene of suffering, since the poison was administered to him in Italy, was at length released; and as, in the hour

hour of approaching death, the visions of ambition receded from his view, he made lord O'Melvyl the only reparation in his power, for his long opposition to his wishes, by solemnly approving and ratifying his choice.

Though lord Beaudesert's character and conduct were not such as to excite that lively filial tenderness which Geraldine had experienced during her short intercourse with her father, still, to a mind like O'Melvyl's, the loss of a parent must always be a painful blow. It added a shade of pensive softness to his manners, that rendered him, if possible, more calculated for a companion to the melancholy Geraldine.

In time the lovers began to look through the dim horizon of grief, and admit the possibility of future pleasure. Geraldine could smile through her tears, and Ferdinand, to divert her mind from dwelling too intently upon her late sorrows, described to her what yet remained unexplained in *his own*.—" I have often admired,

mired, my Geraldine," he said, "the parity of fate that seemed to destine us for each other: both motherless—both restored to our remaining parent late in life. But would you believe it, my beloved, the point on which your scrupulous delicacy was most alarmed—the reproach—the only reproach that ever could be affixed to the name of your father, was in danger of being also ascribed to *mine!*"

Geraldine listened in breathless amazement.—"Lord Beaudesert accused of treason! Lord Beaudesert, the most zealous, the most unqualified supporter of the monarchy!"

She now remembered the various unexplained eccentricities in Ferdinand's conduct—his mysterious connexion with San Carlos—his disappearance at the ball—and rejoiced that the happy hour was at length arrived, when all these obscurities should be done away.

Ferdinand seemed at a loss to begin, when he had announced his complicated story.

story. At length, with a blush of the truest and most ingenuous modesty—"It is a tale, my love," he said, "on which it becomes not either you or me to dwell. While my father lived, delicacy for his fame prevented my alluding to it. You have heard—you have no doubt been told, of my father's long attachment to San Carlos's mother. She was—I must offend your purity by naming her—his adored, his idolized mistress. But my father himself little knew that, all the time, Fiorenza was playing a double game—that while she made him believe there was no security for her life or happiness but at Palermo, she was, in fact, residing there as an accredited spy of the French king of Naples, and transmitted, from time to time, to Murat, in return for the stipend he allowed her, information of much importance to him, and of considerable detriment to the English.

"Her artful conduct was never publicly discovered; for had it, by any means, become

come known that the lady to whom my father was so long and so blindly attached was an active enemy to this country, not all the principles of loyalty and honour he professed could have saved him from the imputation of sharing in her guilt.

"At length the spell was dissolved; my father returned home, but with him brought San Carlos, who was cruelly disappointed on the discovery of *my* claims to his fortune. Though his possessions abroad were large, they were in an embarrassed state, from his father's profusion; he dreaded the effects of a counter-revolution in Naples, and had set his heart on a permanent establishment in Ireland, the country of his adopted father.

"Judging of me by himself, he, in order to induce me to accede to some provision being made for him, informed me of the dreadful secret, of which he had been put in possession by the serpent Fiorenza, and threatened to expose my father as her associate and confederate.

"I was

"I was aware that this malicious turn might be given to lord Beaudesert's conduct. He had, for a series of years, expatriated himself with a fascinating and beautiful foreigner, and exhibited the most total indifference towards his native country. New to the pleasure of filial sensations, I would, at that period, have died to save my father an additional uneasiness. I saw him eagerly pursuing visions of power, unmindful of the uncertain tenure by which his life was held; and could I blast his only-remaining hope, and send his gray hairs dishonoured to the grave? I promised every thing to the unprincipled San Carlos: my purse, my interest, even my society, which he imagined gave him acceptance and consequence, were ever at his command. He became my *constant companion.*

"But now, my Geraldine, I am come to the time when he demanded and obtained of me a much more important sacrifice. At the same period—nearly at the

the same moment, on the night of the fancy-ball, attired as a slave yourself, you completely enslaved us. *I* had frequently admired you before, but had never asked myself where that admiration would lead till then. San Carlos was immediately and irretrievably captivated. From some mistake, occasioned by the similarity of our dresses, he obtained a few minutes conversation with you, and ascertained the state of our inclinations towards each other. The next morning, the very morning after I had told you (do you not remember it, Geraldine?) that you had enslaved me, and for life, the villain came to me, told me that he had marked you for his own, and that, if I continued to cross his suit, all my former precautions should be vain; and in eight-and-forty hours my father should be branded as a self-condemned exile, a traitor, a voluntary accomplice of the enemies of England. I knew San Carlos's powers of malicious exaggeration; I also knew another secret,

so painful, that I hardly could bear to reflect on it myself—my father's days were numbered! the physicians had apprised me, that though he might linger yet a year or two, it was impossible he could ever recover. Rather than my unhappy parent should not spend this remnant of life in honour and peace, I resolved to withdraw, for the present, my pretensions —to watch and guard you, but at a distance, and to trust to a future period, not very far removed, for the reward of my painful forbearance."

"Then—well, and *then?*" repeated Geraldine, with an inquiring look, and a voice of playful, tender reproach.

"Why then, I believe the world—the cruel world, stepped in between you and me, and had nearly severed two hearts, the most completely suited to each other. 'Tis a strange tempting world, my Geraldine; shall we not sometimes fly from it when our lots become one?"

In music, *who* has not sometimes acknowledged

knowledged the happy effect of a beautiful and skilfully-managed *transition?* I know not why the same advantages may not be conceded to the musical voice of lord Beaudesert. If his latter justification was not very satisfactory, it was at least very well received, which answers the same purpose.

"One question more," said Geraldine, smiling, "and then even *female* curiosity is gratified. The ball—the note—your sudden and long disappearance?"

"Oh!" replied Ferdinand, again colouring, "it was in consequence of a *rencontre*, which I could not avoid, with that accursed San Carlos. He had long presumed, upon the snares he had thrown around me, to use the most disrespectful language respecting my father; and when I declared my belief that *his* mother, for her *own* interest, would wish to conceal the double game she had played, he replied, with insolent triumph, that, on the contrary, she gloried in it. The day on which that fa-

mous ball was to be, he gave me more provocation than usual; our quarrel became amenable to the fatal rules of honour; each influenced by his own reasons, we concerted the meeting with the utmost secrecy; and San Carlos, after having the honour of pistoling me, went off, I doubt not very calmly, to claim your fair hand at the ball."

"Too true," replied Geraldine, shuddering.

"As I was not wounded in the sword-arm," resumed Ferdinand, assuming a tone of lightness, to dissipate this unpleasant impression, "I contrived to scrawl a few scarcely-legible lines to you, my guardian angel, which were given by my confidential man to the adroit Mrs. Le Mercier, and by her deposited upon your dressing-table. I was conveyed, by my own desire, to the house of the only friend whom I had entrusted with my secret—the gentleman who acted as my second: he had a pretty cottage in the county of Wicklow,

Wicklow, and there I was soon afterwards established.

"My reason for this apparently-strange conduct was to save my father the shock and surprise of hearing of a combat, that would have appeared to him next to unnatural, between two men whom he almost equally regarded, and had adopted as brothers. Now, had I remained at his house, I must have confessed I had been wounded in a duel; then would have followed torrents of questions as to the how, and the where, and the when; and as I always shrunk from uttering the smallest untruth——"

"Except to a lady," interrupted Geraldine, playfully.

"Oh! except to a lady, *senz' altro**," replied lord Beaudesert, in the same tone, with a graceful bend of the head, and a slight, conscious smile. "But where was I, inhuman Geraldine! when you interrupted me? Oh! recovering slowly in the

 county

* Senz' altro—sans doute.

county of Wicklow. I was nearly restored to my usual state of health and tone of spirits, when the servant I have already mentioned to you burst into my room, and, without any preparation, but rather that eagerness with which the vulgar communicate a piece of disastrous intelligence, informed me of the self-destruction of the wretched San Carlos. You, my love, who have at length learned to judge of my heart by your own, will do me the justice to believe, that though released from such an iron tyranny, my first emotion was that of pain mingled with amazement. I knew San Carlos had some embarrassments, but did not know their extent. He had exhausted *my* resources —he was afraid to apply to my father. His mother had anticipated his revenues, and considerably diminished his Italian property, by extravagant and wasteful expenditure; creditors were clamorous; ruin stared him in the face; and he had once more recourse to the pistol, which he

he was this time so kind as to direct against himself, instead of me.

"As soon as I could recover my scattered spirits, my first idea was to fly to my Geraldine, to renew my interest in her heart—openly to profess the love no treacherous Italian serpent could longer forbid me to avow. Need I recall our meeting in 'Geraldine's cottage?' *ought* I to recall the scenes that so rapidly followed?"

"No, certainly," replied Miss Fitz-Clare. "But, oh!" continued the sweet enthusiast, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes to heaven, while she thought of Ferdinand's life being exposed, like Fitz-Clare's, in a duel, "how nearly have I been deprived, by the murderous passions of the vilest of men, of my dearest, my most valued friend, as well as my father!"

Unable to support the melancholy image she had conjured up, her head drooped upon his shoulder, and she dissolved into a silent shower of tears.

"Now, dearest Geraldine!" said Ferdinand, trying to smile away her tears, "there is something in your manner of mentioning me that never exactly pleases me."

"And what is that?" said she, making an effort to recompose herself.

"Why you always name me in company with your father, or some venerable *friend*, as you respectfully call me, and talk as if the affection you felt for both were somewhat similar. Now *that* I do not wish to believe; I would not be loved for *duty's* sake alone; I would——"

"In short, you would and you would not," interrupted Geraldine, gaily. "No one can be a severer censor than you on female manners, and yet no one is more fastidiously alive to apprehensions of not being valued with sufficient fervency."

"My own meaning better expressed," replied lord Beaudesert, laughing; "but such as I am, Geraldine, you must endure me. I am what the united powers of

nature,

nature, and a defective, desultory education, made me."

"You are," thought Geraldine, "the dear, dangerous being destined to please, and therefore to control me."

With such sentiments, it is not to be supposed that she extended his probation beyond the time decorum required. As soon as it was expired, Geraldine Fitz-Clare and Matilda Southwell were united, on the same day, to Ferdinand, now marquis of Beaudesert, and lord Templemore.

Sir Charles Southwell had a third bride to give away, to whose affairs we have not lately been able, on account of more important matter, to attend.

Mr. Stratford Gore, long plagued with a fanciful, nervous, poetical wife, had often admired the perfect elegance with which the establishment at Meadowscourt was conducted, and learnt that it was almost entirely owing to the skilful administration of our good-humoured friend, Miss O'Reilly. On being deprived of his first

 partner,

partner, he thought she would make an admirable successor; not being of the opinion of those who "never tell their love," he confided to Miss O'Reilly his sentiments on the subject, even before the family left Meadowscourt for town the preceding winter; and the same auspicious day that gave Geraldine to her adoring Beaudesert, Mr. Stratford Gore (having gone through all proper forms of widowership) made Miss Dora O'Reilly the happy and respectable mistress of Mount Amaranth.

This bustle, though very delightful to the parties concerned, was a little too much for sir Charles, in his present state of health, which had been, for some time past, very fluctuating. Lady Louisa was anxious for him to try the effects of strict regimen and perfect tranquillity in vain. An attack upon his chest and lungs, more severe than any he yet had suffered, brought him to the brink of the grave. He did recover, however, impaired indeed in

in those personal graces which, even in advancing years, had given him such a dangerous superiority over most of his sex, but as much benefited in mind as his frame was injured. The faithful, fond devotion with which lady Louisa had attended on him, made an impression on a heart not naturally callous. One expression she had used, when he was at the worst, by convincing him of what he had long doubted—that he was still beloved, had roused all that was good or praiseworthy in his disposition to incite him to deserve such persevering attachment.

One day that sir Charles was believed insensible, a friend, who witnessed the close attendance and excessive grief of lady Louisa, remonstrated with her upon its too great indulgence, and, alluding to her husband's past conduct, remarked, that, even supposing the worst to happen which her agonizing fears anticipated, *that* consideration must, in some measure, di-

minish the poignancy of her regret.—"Talk not to me of losing him," the afflicted wife replied, in an accent of the wildest anguish; "have you known passion yourself, and are you yet to learn that it is not the deserts of the object, but the tenderness—the fondness, with which he is cherished, that render the apprehension of his loss insupportable?"

In that trying hour she forgot all his frailties, and only saw in him the dear being who had gained her earliest affections, and ever preserved a powerful, though latent hold over her heart.

Sir Charles Southwell determined, by his future conduct, to make amends for the former wrongs of this most estimable woman.

During the tedious period of his convalescence, that happy temper, which lady Louisa had allowed him, even when unable to give him any other praise, prevented sir Charles from sinking into a querulous

rulous invalid, as the various resources of his highly-cultivated mind preserved him from becoming a discontented one.

After a youth spent in tumultuous, but unsatisfactory pursuits, lady Louisa saw the sun of domestic happiness arise to gild the evening of her days, and had often occasion to bless the welcome visitation that, in weaning a beloved husband from the world, had restored him to herself.

Little now remains but to say a few words of the Pendennis family, and our old friend Katherine Lawless.

Olivia Pendennis, after sporting, for a season or two, her neglected beauties at the Castle, expending her grandmother's legacy in dresses, and running in debt, besides, with every milliner that would trust her, was glad to accept the offer of a clergyman, residing at the bottom of Connaught, with a curacy of eighty pounds a-year, and a family, by a former wife, of five troublesome children.

Diana

Diana resides at Mount Parnassus, and is still unmarried; no gentleman having been found daring enough to domesticate himself with a lady so well skilled in the dangerous science of mystification.

Bridget Pendennis has been some time married to Zachary Mudge. They go about the country, preaching their doctrines and making converts, sometimes received with gladness, sometimes without a place to lay their heads, exhibiting every where an example of fervent zeal, and truly-sincere, if not enlightened piety.

Cobham Pendennis, having quarrelled with Zephaniah Toplofty, the preacher, being wroth, rebuked him as "a weak brother" and "unstable as water." Cobham, indignant, determined to refute the charge, threw up his commission in the army of saints militant, joined a company of strolling players, and wrote to his uncle, that if he would send him twenty pounds and a suit of clothes, he never would trouble him more.

Some

Some time since writing the above, Peter Pendennis, of Mount Parnassus, has, in reward of his errantry in various countries, been promoted to the distinguished honour of knighthood. He is now sir Peter Pendennis, and has laid his literary laurels at the feet of the pretty widow O'Carolan. This fair creature, who is fated to be the object of love to men whose writings she is scarcely able to read, has gratefully smiled upon our tourist's proposals; she is now lady Pendennis, and makes as good a lady as many. Since his accession of title, Pendennis has had serious thoughts of giving up his situation of head of the establishment at Mount Parnassus. He designs shortly to set out upon another tour, and is only waiting till he shall be able to resign his sceptre, like Alexander, "to the worthiest."

Valued by every branch of the Southwell family for her affection and fidelity, Katherine Lawless has, at length, with the consent of all parties, made a final transfer

transfer of her services to the marchioness of Beaudesert. Treated by the whole household, as she herself expresses it, "with the greatest possible respect," she obeys, or rather commands her mistress, with as much zeal and assiduity as ever, and promises herself still greater pleasures, in extending, over a new and rising race, her whimsical empire of mingled tyranny and love.

Become, by the death of her father, sole heiress to Fitz-Clare's restored estates, Geraldine values fortune principally as it enables her to make amends to her amiable husband for the more brilliant prospects he generously gave up for her sake, and finds, in the tender and increasing attachment of lord Beaudesert, the best consolation for the tears she still gives to the memory of Fitz-Clare.

FASHIONABLE CONNEXIONS;

OR, THE

VILLA IN CUMBERLAND.

Cet exemple pour vous doit être redoutable,
Un grand cœur aux malheurs est souvent destiné;
Le vôtre est généreux, grand, sensible, équitable—
Et tel enfin qu'il faut pour être infortuné.

DESHOULIERES.

FASHIONABLE CONNEXIONS.

CHAPTER I.

Puff. Yes, sir, by me they were instructed to clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruits—to insinuate obsequious rivulets into visionary groves—to teach courteous shrubs to nod their approbation of the grateful soil; or, on emergencies, to raise upstart oaks, where there never had been an acorn—to create a delightful vicinage without the assistance of a neighbour, or fix the temple of Hygeia in the fens of Lincolnshire! *The Critic.*

"DESIRABLE country residence. To be let, that most select, unique, and interesting modern dwelling, called the Lodge, within half-a-mile of the pleasant and well-supplied market-town of Rothbury. The house and offices, well distributed, airy, and

and commodious; rooms, lofty and spacious, commanding a superb view of Keswick, and picturesque variety of grand, bold, and original lake and mountain scenery; gardens and orchard well stocked with every species of flowers and fruit; pleasure-grounds and shrubbery, most tastefully laid out; *situate* in the midst of a delightful neighbourhood, consisting of families of the first distinction," &c. &c.

"Julia," said Mr. Somerville, as he handed the paper across the breakfast-table to his sister, "I think our search is at an end; this would be the very thing for us. I am going about that business you know of to the North; and if the villa answers the description, shall take it for you."

Mr. Somerville set out the next day upon his journey. On arriving near the place of his destination, he began to think he had mistaken his route, for no such dwelling as the Lodge was to be found. Perceiving at length a neat white house, with

with a field before it, he desired the postilion to drive up, and inquire the way, when, to his infinite astonishment, Mr. Somerville learnt that this was the Lodge itself! All its adventitious embellishments it owed to Mr. Puff. Upon examination, the lofty and spacious rooms dwindled into the most moderate dimensions; the pleasure-ground and shrubbery were a paddock, with one hawthorn bush in the middle of it; and the superb view of Keswick, and grand lake and mountain scenery, consisted of a blue speck on the verge of the horizon, to be discerned on a very clear day from one of the garret-windows. What a transformation! The owner, had he seen the advertisement, would not have known his own house again!

The delightful neighbourhood was no less indebted to the potent wand of this powerful magician. It was composed of one crazy, old, deaf dowager of quality, under the tutelage of her keeper (a mad doctor

doctor from London), who was living, or rather extinguishing, as fast as she could, in the habitable part of a dilapidated baronial residence—one country squire, his wife and family; the squire was reckoned but an indifferent character, and the rest of the family had not profited by the polish of the rising generation. There was also the curate, who served the village in which these worthies resided—a personage difficult to describe, being half-clergyman, half-farmer. Finding himself in want of some means to augment the very scanty stipend allowed him for the performance of his Sunday duties, the reverend Mr. Sams was obliged to make up the deficiency, by a sedulous attention to the cares of agriculture on week-days, and might be much more aptly designated as a labourer in the hayfield than a labourer in the vineyard.

Of the inhabitants of the town of Rothbury we have, as yet, said nothing; but it may not be amiss to add, that, within

visiting

visiting distance, though not so near as the above-mentioned families, was Torpington Castle, the seat of viscount Lulworth, which castle, for reasons that shall appear hereafter, deserves a paragraph to itself.

However let down in his high-raised expectations, still there were reasons that rendered Horatio Somerville extremely desirous of removing his sister Julia from the neighbourhood of London. He knew that, to her harassed feelings, a hermitage, in a remote part of the country, would be preferable to a palace in Kent or Surrey— places which, since her misfortunes, she had already tried, and where each familiar object recalled to her sorrowing bosom the bleeding images of her murdered happiness.

Having transmitted a succinct account of his disappointment, Somerville submitted to this cherished sister whether the Lodge, even in its present state (and, to his sanguine mind, it appeared capable of much

much improvement), might not be an endurable temporary residence; and the answer he received from her was such as to induce him to take it for a twelvemonth.

The morning before their final departure from London, the brother and sister lingered together, affectionately talking over the mournful and terrible events which had rendered that great city a desert to them.—"I must be off to Coutts's," said Somerville, at length abruptly rising. "One always leaves such a variety of things to be done at the last moment."

Julia rose too.

"One word more," said Horatio, as his hand rested on the lock of the door. "Hark ye—you needn't say to our numerous very dear correspondents, and your cursed female gossips, the exact state of the case at Rothbury. Leave the plantations, pleasure-grounds, and shrubbery, where my friend Puff's plastic hand has placed them. It is not necessary we should be supposed to be gone to rusticate

in

in a hovel. Better be envied than pitied, you know."

Julia laid her hand earnestly on Somerville's arm.—"Do not—oh, do not, dearest brother, again repeat that false—false maxim! What is it but, in other words, to say, better hang out false colours—better appear what you are not—better lie, cheat, and deceive."

"You are warm, Julia."

"Ah, Somerville! had *others* not been warm, I should not be now seeking an asylum from agonizing recollection. I should not—oh God! oh God!"

She held her hands tightly over her throbbing temples.

Horatio approached her with a look of the tenderest pity.—"My beloved sister! did I not, when misfortune blasted the opening promise of your youth, kneeling, take an oath never to separate my destiny from yours—to supply to you the place of father, friend, and guardian? I now ratify that oath, in the presence of all your

 sorrows,

sorrows, attesting, as its witnesses, your sufferings, youth, and innocence; and may the good forsake me in this world, and Heaven abandon me in the next, on the day that I forget thee, Julia!"

The feelings of Horatio Somerville were impetuous, as his heart was good; but he had a buoyancy and elasticity of spirits that prevented any subject, however painful, from long depressing him. His sister Julia, on the contrary, but scarcely entered on the threshold of active existence, had, for ever, bidden adieu to the gaiety of youth. *One* fearful and dread calamity had cast a black cloud over her late brilliant prospects: but *that* affliction, which would have crushed a meaner spirit, had only expanded and elevated hers; it produced a premature but rich development of her understanding and reasoning faculties.

Julia Somerville united to the innocence, modesty, and candour, that suited her age, the solidity and experience of a more

more advanced period. Misfortune had, to her eyes, torn off the mask from the world's gaudy and specious allurements; she could already judge of things as they are, and, like the gifted but sad seer of Glenfinlas, might at once boast and lament the melancholy privilege of estimating the present and future in all their mournful reality. Still she was liable to the dominion of strong passions, or rather strong affections, the only passions a woman ought to know; in other words, she was still accessible to the thrills of grief and joy: and Julia possessed beauty too, sweet and dangerous gift! powerful to excite reciprocal attachment, but not to preserve it; and taste to discriminate merit and applaud it; and sensibility to weep in agony the insufficiency of all those endowments to defend the lacerated bosom from misfortune.

Scarcely were they settled in their new abode, when Horatio Somerville asked his

sister, smiling, if every thing was prepared for a hostile invasion?

Julia started, and changed colour.

"Nay, dear girl," resumed her brother, affectionately, "I do not mean that we are called upon to examine the capabilities of the house for sustaining a siege. The battery of teacups and saucers was all I alluded to; for it will certainly not be long before the natives come down upon you."

"I flatter myself, on the contrary," Julia replied, "that they will allow us a little breathing time."

Julia was mistaken; and the hours she employed, by her brother's recommendation, in arranging the economy of the tea-table, were spent in a strict scrutiny into the *visitability* of the new-comers, at the house of a lady who, from the decided superiority of her birth, fortune, and establishment, was allowed to take the lead in all matters of fashion and taste at Roth-

bury,

bury, and who therefore deserves the compliment of being ushered in at the head of a new chapter.

CHAPTER II

> Conscious of age, she recollects her youth,
> And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
> Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er he came,
> Scrawl'd upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name;
> Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,
> And drank the little bumper every day.
>
> COWPER. *Truth.*

MISS Rosilda Ravenshawe had been, in her youth, a celebrated beauty—was the reigning toast of the clubs, the belle of the race-balls, and had, in the common phrase, "refused the county." Besides all these causes for self-consequence, Miss Ravenshawe, though she now condescended to be the inhabitant of the best house in Rothbury, was of one of the old county

 families

families—had had her cradle rocked beneath the roof of an ancient hall, and roamed, in childhood, in her father's spacious park. For these advantages she was allowed all due honour, and received that deference from the other inhabitants of the town, which even in England, cold, mercantile, calculating England, is never denied to birth, when accompanied by fortune.

It may be supposed then that the *notables* of Rothbury anxiously awaited Miss Ravenshawe's fiat, before they ventured a definitive opinion on the strangers, whose arrival, manners, and habits, had already, though so little known, been the subject of infinite tattle, gossip, and curiosity. A party, assembled *en petit comité* at her house, ventured to ask the lady's opinion of the new inhabitants of the Lodge.

Owing to the mutilated report made by her favourite attendant, Miss Ravenshawe had fallen into the egregious mistake of supposing Julia to be the wife of Horatio; and

and she replied, in consequence of this impression, that, by what she heard, Mrs. Somerville must be a very eccentric, flighty, odd sort of person.

"In the first place," said Mrs. Sanderson, with a very significant nod and wink, "I can tell you, the lady you call Mrs. Somerville is not Mr. Somerville's wife."

"Indeed!" said Miss Rosilda, blushing as young ladies blush at fifty-three, and with an "a-hem!" which shewed her imagination had outscampered Mrs. Sanderson's intelligence a mile. "A-hem! how difficult it is to judge of people! Amelia, my dear," to her niece, a pretty, interesting-looking young woman, "you may go into the garden, and finish collecting the herbs for your scent jar. A-hem! Pray then, Mrs. Sanderson, not that I am very curious to be informed, who may she be?"

"His sister," replied Mrs. Sanderson, with the most perfect *sang froid.*

Miss Ravenshawe hated Mrs. Sanderson for a plebeian, and Mrs. Sanderson

 hated

hated Miss Ravenshawe for a prude, and was never happier than when she had thus, as she used bluntly to express it, put the old lady's curiosity upon a wrong scent.

"A-hem!" said Miss Rosilda Ravenshawe again; but this was an a-hem congratulatory, for her niece Amelia, who preferred hearing something more of the gay and handsome Horatio to culling of simples, had, notwithstanding her aunt's licence to depart, as the Irish say, kept never minding, and was still a listener to the conversation.

Mrs. Sanderson now turned to her daughters, to confirm her assertion, that, by what little she had heard of the strangers, there was no harm in them.

The four Miss Sandersons, opening their mouths all at once, like a nest of young woodpeckers, answered to the affirmative in chorus; they had dined in company with Mr. Somerville, and unanimously declared him to be an exceedingly pleasant, agreeable, gentlemanly young man

man—an eulogium which they had, separately and collectively, bestowed on every young man of their acquaintance, from the first day of their introduction into the world.

"If the family don't turn out very sociable," continued Miss Eliza Sanderson, "I'm sure it will be no fault of his; but the sister, I'm told, is the most romantic absurd creeter—likes nothing but taking long walks in the country, or sits at home in an arbour, with natural flowers entwined in her hair. But I'm sure she does it for effect, and to be reckoned the more remarkable."

"Well, if she does," replied Miss Ravenshawe, "she is only in search of admiration, like other young ladies."

Miss Eliza felt the reproof, blushed, and was silent.

"La, now," said Mrs. Mapletoft, the widow of the late rector of Rothbury, "it is as good as a comedy, as my Mr. Mapletoft used to say, when ladies go into com-

pany with those headdresses of natural flowers. Mrs. Craig did so at one of our parties; it was a wreath of jonquils she wore; and before the end of the evening, the heat of the room had blown them out so, that her head looked, for all the world, like a *chevaux-de-frise,* and my Mr. Mapletoft said it was as good as a comedy; but, to be sure, the rooms in the rectory used to be pretty crowded. I did not live, in poor Mr. Mapletoft's time, as I now do, in a hovel. Miss Eliza Sanderson, did I ever tell you how barbarously I was used by Mr. Lascelles, the present rector of Rothbury?"

"Oh yes, ma'am, a thousand times," Miss Eliza had a great mind to reply; for she had no inclination to hear any harm of Mr. Lascelles, whom she thought (as she did two or three others) an exceedingly pleasant, agreeable, gentlemanly young man.

Mrs. Mapletoft had never forgiven Mr. Lascelles, for not complimenting her with the

the rectory-house during the term of her natural life, and contenting himself with a dirty lodging in the town of Rothbury. Every polite and humane attention, short of that, he had paid the widow of his predecessor; but there is no reasoning with selfishness and folly when united; and poor Mrs. Mapletoft persisted in bewailing, to every one who would listen to her, the barbarity of Mr. Lascelles, the only thing (except her own weak nerves) which she did not appear inclined to consider "as good as a comedy."

How differently are the same characters judged by different persons! Very unlike the pastor briefly characterized in the first chapter, of all the visitors that paid their compliments at the Lodge, during the first weeks of the arrival of the strangers, Adolphus Lascelles was the only one who left a trace upon Julia's mind. He was, indeed, rather an uncommon being to meet in a remote part of the country.

It is when Nature, like a tired painter,

weary of repeating the same insipid, formal, or affected heads, indulges in a study, that she produces such a face and form as that of Lascelles. But his prepossessing appearance was soon forgotten, in the more interesting contemplation of the worth and dignity that emanated from the mind within; and Horatio and Julia each confessed to themselves, that they had not, for a long time, spent an hour so pleasantly as *that* passed in his company. Every subject was discussed—foreign countries, the surrounding scenery, books, amusements, Horatio's improvements, and the harp of Julia—nothing came amiss to Mr. Lascelles. He had evidently travelled, and was now, at eight-and-twenty, comfortably settled in a valuable living—a proof that the young gentleman must either have merit or interest, perhaps both. Yet, like most other people, this paragon seemed inclined to quarrel with his lot. As he gave Mr. Somerville a cordial invitation to visit him, a shade of discontent passed

passed over his beautiful brow, and turning the dewy brilliancy of his dark hazel eyes upon Julia—" I would add another request," he said—" but to what should I ask Miss Somerville? Unlike the neighbourhood that surround me, destitute of every endearing tie, I possess competence, but have forfeited felicity; and, like the poor savage boy of Aveyron, may repeat to the hollow winds to which I listen—" Alone!- Alone!"

There was something in this parting speech so very unlike the common forms of life, that it would have bordered on the romantic, if not the ridiculous, but for the look of intense and earnest feeling—the voice of thrilling melody, that irresistibly found their passage to the heart. Yet Julia's reason did not assent to the species of curiosity and painful interest with which Mr. Lascelles's mysterious expressions inspired her, and Horatio rallied her most unmercifully on her sympathy.—" That a young parson of twenty-eight should not have

have formed his household," said he, "is not such an irreparable misfortune as to be bemoaned in the tone of Werter or St. Preux."

"We cannot judge of people till we are acquainted with their habitual manners," answered Julia, gravely. "Ah, Horatio! would not *those* be liable to strange errors who judged *from outward appearances of us?*"

In her own mind she found plenty of excuses for the apparent eccentricity of the amiable recluse. He might have had a disappointment, or he might be a *laker*, and fond of being solitary and sublime; yet, no—his last words did not indicate that he was satisfied with his lot. However, one must not apply the same rules in judging of persons in the great world, or persons whose profession condemns them to retirement. It was very natural that a romantic country might give the inhabitant a tendency to romance.

Like most ladies who have never been fifty

fifty miles from town, Julia had several floating prejudices, both in favour of, and against the country. Her imagination was particularly prepossessed on the subject of the North—the land of poets and pedlars, where bards sing in clusters like nightingales, by every bush, and where each mountain, stream, and *tarn*, invites to poetic inspiration.

These, and a thousand other considerations, induced her to judge the young pastor favourably; and she experienced a curiosity, not unmixed with inquietude, to develop the full cause of the point so irresistibly enforced by the language of his eloquent voice and eye—"Alone! alone!"

CHAP.

CHAPTER III.

> No place is so disagreeable and unimproving as a country town. I should like to divide my time between the town and country; in a lone house, with the business of farming and planting, where my mind might gain strength by solitary musing; and in a metropolis, to rub off the rust of thought, and polish the taste which the contemplation of nature had rendered just and correct.
>
> *Letters on Norway.*

JULIA and Horatio Somerville were born to the expectation of almost-boundless wealth; but as Horatio was one of that spirited class of beings who think every man should have some serious objeet of occupation, he had made choice of the profession of the law. An unexpected crash had reduced him from opulence to mediocrity, impaired his interest, and diminished the number of his friends; and a misfortune of a much more affecting nature

ture that succeeded gave him a temporary disgust to society; still he resolved to follow up his profession; and, as his prospects in London were not so flattering as they had been, he proposed to his sister the idea of practising for a year or two in the country.

Of this she highly approved; and Horatio proceeded to open his plan to her.—"The mart for talent, as well as wealth, seems at this moment overstocked," he said; "but the instant a favourable opening presents, 'tis easy to shift the scene. Meanwhile, what a much more important personage is a barrister practising in the country, surrounded by little attorneys (I beg pardon, solicitors) than a briefless young lawyer in London, eclipsed and lost amid the constellation of talents in Westminster Hall! Cæsar at the foot of the Alps, instead of the second man in Rome—hey, Julia? Better be envied than——but I had forgot, that's not your maxim." Observing the shade of pensiveness

siveness that gathered on her brow—" So cheer up, my Julia! put on your gipsy-hat, and look killing, for this is the hour for bishop Anselm's tomb."

This was an appointment with Mr. Lascelles, who was "a dab at antiquities," as Mrs. Mapletoft phrased it, to shew them a monument of curious Saxon architecture in his parish-church. After they had examined it, Adolphus persuaded them to turn their steps towards the rectory to rest. Julia was never more agreeably surprised in her life. All the embellishments the Lodge *should* have had, were to be found at "Ivied Porch;" and the approach to it more resembled a gentleman's pleasure-ground than an humble parsonage. As they entered the house, a beautiful little girl, between two and three years old, tottered out to meet the rector, and saluted him with the endearing appellation of "papa!"

"Ah, Celestina!" cried Lascelles, and darting forward, caught her in his arms. Then

Then turning towards Julia, with the lovely child—"Will you allow me sometimes," he said, "to bring my little girl with me to the Lodge? she is possessed of intelligence far beyond her age."

Encouraged by the strangers, the little girl began now to prattle freely. The name of "dear mamma," of "mamma who was gone away," frequently escaped her infantine lips, and every time a shade of the deepest sadness clouded the fine brow of Adolphus. Here was a rush of new ideas! Mr. Lascelles a married man! a widower—so young!—already doomed to mourn the dissevered ties of life! There was nothing very wonderful in all this; yet, amidst all her conjectures respecting his melancholy expressions, this simple and natural solution had never occurred to Julia. He was so young and handsome, she had at once assumed it as a fact that he was a bachelor.

"I anticipate, with a mixture of pain and pleasure, the time," said Lascelles, speaking

speaking to Somerville, "that I shall be obliged to send this girl to school; of pain, because I shall lose the solace of my existence—of pleasure, because the sooner she is put under the tuition of persons of her own sex the better."

"Poor little thing!" said Julia. "Will you not often come to see me, Celestina?"

"Tell the lady you will," cried Adolphus; and added, in a lower tone—"Poor innocent! she must early learn the art of making friends."

He bent over her to conceal his emotion as he spoke; and, as the fine countenance of the young parent was approached, in touching sadness, to the unformed yet beautiful features of the innocent child, Julia contemplated a spectacle the most dangerous to the mind of sensibility—an amiable being indulging in the sweetest and kindest affections of our nature.

Miss Somerville no longer wondered at the research and studied elegance of every thing at Ivied Porch. A female hand had

had been there, though that hand was now cold, and the female could surely not be of a common stamp who had been the chosen companion of Lascelles!

Some trifling decorations, which still adorned the room, struck her as having certainly been a lady's work; and in passing through an anti-room, on leaving the house, she remarked a very fine painting in oil, representing a young lady of uncommon beauty. These were then the features that had fascinated Lascelles! Next to the picture hung a glass, and Julia could not help acknowledging the face, though lovely, was inferior to *that* the glass reflected.

Never did she bestow more care than that night in adorning those beautiful features. She was to spend the evening by invitation at Miss Ravenshawe's; and as it was understood all Rothbury would be there, no doubt such an important personage as the rector would not be omitted.

Julia had miscalculated; no such person

son as the rector of Rothbury was announced; if quantity, however, might be accepted in place of quality, there was company enough. As usual, the men got into a knot, discussing politics and agriculture; the women talked of the markets and the price of washing. We must except the lady of the house herself, Miss Rosilda Ravenshawe. After passing through all the gradations of a beauty, a fine, and an elegant woman, Miss Ravenshawe had, at length, much to her own edification, and the dismay of her well-wishers and friends, settled into a "superior woman;" that is to say, she read none but the driest books of morality and history, loaded her shelves and her memory with facts from which she knew not how to deduce inferences, and browbeat those who, possessed of more candour and as much intellect, honestly avowed the pleasure they took in a more amusing species of reading. This dispute she was now carrying on with a Miss Nelthorpe—a little lady,

lady, very much deformed; but, like many sensible, deformed women, remarkably pleasant, conversable, and good-humoured. Miss Nelthorpe had but one foible—an overweening partiality to the French language, which, as it was not a zeal according to knowledge, often betrayed her into blunders, less creditable to herself than amusing to her hearers.

Notwithstanding her lame French, the little lady had evidently the better of the argument, when, just as her adversary was beginning to evince that sign of weakness, a degree of asperity, Miss Nelthorpe gave up with a good-humour that did honour to her cause, and left Miss Ravenshawe in imaginary possession of the victory.

As for the younger ladies, they were engaged in the usual way—trying to attract the few men that were *attractable* by the approved recipes.

Eliza Sanderson was laughing, tossing her head about, and, with all the ingenuity in

in her power, "affecting to be unaffected." Mary, on the contrary, was trying to be a languishing beauty. Jane had given up the point, and was learning, under Miss Ravenshawe, to be "a very superior young woman." As for the fourth Sanderson, Eleanor, I know not how to describe her, except by saying that she was reckoned a notable proser, even at Rothbury.

From this variety of folly and inanity, it was refreshing to turn to the niece of Miss Ravenshawe—the young lady who did the honours of the house.

The honourable Amelia de Ross was the third child of a very numerous family of brothers and sisters; her mother was sister to Miss Ravenshawe; and her father, viscount Lulworth, a nobleman of that county, more distinguished for birth than fortune, had acceded to her aunt's earnest entreaty, that she might entirely bring her up, in consideration of the large fortune it was in Miss Ravenshawe's power to leave her: but in this his lord-

ship

ship appeared to have sacrificed the happiness of his timid and interesting girl. There was a sternness in Miss Ravenshawe's manner towards her, that gave the idea of something more than habitual severity; and this idea was confirmed by the fearful—the almost-shrinking terror of the niece, whenever obliged to answer or address her aunt. In other respects, every thing in the deportment of Amelia denoted the superiority of her birth and breeding, at the same time that this involuntary superiority was tempered by the most winning affability and grace.

Julia looked at her with feelings of irresistible inclination and sympathy. *Amelia De Ross was the second being whose presence left some trace on her mind since her arrival at Rothbury.*

Notwithstanding it was enlivened by all the noise and nonsense of a round table, the evening passed off but heavily—an accident which was attributed by Julia to the absence of Lascelles; and by Miss

Eliza Sanderson, to that of a certain Mr. Tom Birkit, without whom she asserted no party could be amusing.

"And who is Mr. Tom Birkit?"

Eliza declared he was an exceedingly pleasant, agreeable, gentlemanly young man; very entertaining, and——

"He is a practising attorney at Rothbury," added poor literal Eleanor.

"Pshaw!" said Eliza; "he only practises for his amusement."

"For his amusement!"

"True, upon my credit! Why, Lord bless you! he is the eldest son of Mr. Birkit, of Bear Hall (the graceless squire alluded to in the first chapter), and will have a matter of three thousand a-year when his father dies."

"A gentleman of fortune to breed up his eldest son an attorney!"

"That's old Mr. Birkit's whim. Says it's the best way to teach Tom to look after his property. A sad man old Mr. Birkit—I mean a very gay man. Shocking, isn't

isn't it at his time of life? Keeps his son upon a miserable shabby allowance. But Mr. Tom Birkit has very good prospects, you see; and his father may break his neck, you know, from one day to another."

Strange perversion of language, where the words gay and sad are used to convey similar ideas, and a man's good prospects consist in his father's breaking his neck!

"Hush! The conquering hero comes!" said Mary, changing colour, and laying her arm upon Eliza's.

Enter Mr. Tom Birkit.

The ladies who were in love with him might safely sing,

> "No, 'twas neither shape nor feature
> Made me own your sovereign sway."

It was his mind then—the charms of his elegant raillery and well-turned compliments that delighted them.

Tom Birkit was not only reckoned clever in his profession, but, during his pre-

vious studies, had received applause for his literary compositions both in verse and prose. But home had spoiled all; seeing nothing but examples of rudeness and ill manners there, he had recourse to books for information, and unfortunately picked up somewhere, that women were never to be approached with the language of learning or sense. Now what to substitute for this Tom did not exactly know; he determined, however, to commence elegant trifler, and always addressed them with a string of the most absurd impertinencies memory or imagination could suggest. "Mistaking raillery for railing," he inverted lord Chesterfield's rule, and attacked, with his rude scalping-knife, the real defects, mental and corporeal, of his friends.

Observing all the females on the rack of expectation for his notice, Mr. Tom Birkit looked round him, with the most condescending sweetness, as who should say—"Patience! I will address you all in turn;" and then began—"Ha, Mrs. Sanderson!

derson! any wonderful new discoveries in housekeeping? How I long for a lecture on practical economy! Mother Mapletoft, are you for a rubber? Hope you have taken care to fill your pockets as full as usual of bad silver. Miss Nelthorpe and Miss Sanderson together! Miss Nelthorpe, the zigzag lightnings of your eyes are only to be equalled by the tortuous beauties of your mien, which, altogether, have put my poor heart in a state of the most alarming combustion."

"How entertaining Mr. Tom Birkit is this evening!" whispered all the ladies at once; "how delightful, but how satirical!"

Mr. Tom Birkit resumed—"Miss Eleanor Sanderson, I am credibly informed you are the author of the acrostic in the last Lady's Magazine, that was so universally admired by all good judges."

"Then, sir, you are misinformed," said Eleanor, eager to justify herself. "I won-

der how any body could say such a thing; I never wrote a line of poetry in my life, I am sure, and cannot imagine how it is done."

"Oh, of course you will deny it; but I know better; and so I left my best compliments with the publisher—for Prosy the poet."

The laugh that was produced by this unexpected termination to the compliment encouraged Mr. Birkit to another essay.—"Miss Eliza," he said, turning abruptly towards the expectant fair, "you were very much admired last night, burn my wig!"

Eliza simpered at this confirmation of her charms, and Tom Birkit added—"We talked of nothing else after you were gone, burn my wig! and do you know what was the general opinion?"

"What was it?" asked Eliza, smiling, and looking up in his face, full of pleased expectation.

"Why,

"Why, that you put on a deal too much rouge—and injudiciously too. Voted *nem. con.* burn my wig!"

This giving a disobliging turn to expected flattery, was one species of wit in which Mr. Birkit excelled. Eliza's fair rivals, delighted with the mortifying check he had given her vanity, when most elate, emulously encouraged him to fresh efforts, by such exclamations as these —"Oh, you amusing wretch! how insupportably severe!" While poor Mrs. Mapletoft declared, with tears in her eyes, it was as good as a comedy to hear him.

Mr. Tom Birkit having acted lady's man for a sufficient space of time not to be accused of neglecting them, now entered into conversation with Somerville; and, no longer tormented by a mistaken wish to shine, displayed, to his astonishment, considerable information and good sense.

At supper, however, the fiends of vanity and bad taste resumed their empire

over him. Having exhausted his witticisms on the company, he attacked the inanimate ornaments. Directing his eye-glass towards a massive silver epergne in the middle of the table—"Aha, my old acquaintance!" he cried, "how many more lunar and solar revolutions are you destined to witness our Attic assemblages?"

"The ornaments might be of a newer fashion," said Miss Ravenshawe, colouring; "but they are of that sort, Mr. Tom Birkit, which derive a merit from antiquity."

This alluded to their representing the crest and arms of her family.

The hint laid the fiend for a little, and the company broke up without Mr. Tom Birkit's having launched many more absurdities among them.

The next day Miss Nelthorpe was among Julia's earliest visitors. She immediately attacked her with—"Well, how do you like the neighbours?" This was too general a question; she then reduced it to—"How did you like the party last night?"

and,

and, lastly, to the simple proposition—"How do you like Mr. Tom Birkit?"

"I think he had a narrow escape of being an idiot."

"There you are mistaken. Tom has both sense and talents; and notwithstanding the prodigious pains he takes to suppress every indication of them in female society, little glimmerings will now and then break forth. All the hallucinations of which you were an auditor last night, were purely by way of making the agreeable to the ladies."

"A most deplorable way, in my opinion."

"Not if you judge by the success. Seven out of the dozen that surrounded the table are in love with him; and the dear creatures are really so ignorant of the limits of gentlemanlike raillery and legitimate pleasantry, that they strive who shall most effectually encourage him in his folly. In short, to appear a sensible man, he only requires a sensible auditory;

 and

and the conversation in which he usually indulges is the severest satire upon the taste of the ladies he addresses. How rude he was to poor Mrs. Sanderson! But what he said was true enough. You must know," lowering her voice, "she is a *paravant*"—we presume Miss Nelthorpe meant a *parvenue*—"she was a butcher's daughter; and an accurate observer may still see something very butcherly about her. Then there is Mrs. Mapletoft—that is another *paravant*, as you may plainly see, poor woman! the moment she opens her mouth. Now Mr. Tom Birkit is far from being a *paravant*, but he is——"

"He is, I take it, an enchanted, if not enchanting knight," said Julia, "who is under a vow not to speak a word of sense in the presence of the ladies, or, like the monster in 'Beauty and the Beast,' compelled, by a maleficent fairy, to conceal that he has common understanding."

"*C'est selon*," answered Miss Nelthorpe, meaning *cela se peut.* "Then there is the

CHAPTER IV.

> The she-bear dwells with me,
> And she hath cubs, one, two, and three.
>
> SOUTHEY'S *Thalaba.*

ONE morning Julia found, upon the breakfast-table, a note, stylishly folded, containing the following words:—

"Eugénie Coquelicot, just returned from Paris, announces to the *noblesse* of Rothbury, that she has brought with her an assortment of millinery and dresses, which she trusts will entitle her to a continuance of their favours, and which may be viewed at her *Magazin de Modes* on Wednesday next."

However

However unusual the phenomenon of a French milliner in the wilds of Cumberland, Julia felt no anxiety to obey her summons; and the note and its contents would soon have been forgot, but for a visit from her kind and officious little friend, Miss Nelthorpe, who came, a few days afterwards, to urge her to go and see what was to be seen, assuring her, that it was always the custom at Rothbury to flock to madame Coquelicot's the moment that, after any of her *soi-disant* transmarine excursions, she made her reappearance among them. Accordingly the two ladies set out.

This temple of fashion was easily distinguished, by the name of the owner over the door, in gold letters of uncommon gaudiness and size, to which were most judiciously added the words, "*from* Paris," the fair owner having never been *at* Paris in the course of her life. Madame Coquelicot was originally, in fact, a Jersey smuggler; and having, in consequence of

various

various circumstances, at length settled in a remote country town in the North, availed herself of her amphibious French, and her skill at purchasing advantageous bargains, to set up for a milliner of first-rate taste and elegance.

They found *la belle Eugénie*, a little thin woman of about fifty, with a vellum skin and a brick-dust complexion, in the centre of a "chair-lumbered closet, just twelve feet by nine," which she dignified by the name of *magazin*, and surrounded by stands, on which were displayed a variety of gaudy and fantastic articles, but none which, to our heroine's discerning eye, bore the stamp of fashion. On each side was a supporter, well qualified for the office she filled; Miss Mildmay, a fine *show face*, and Miss Popham, a little, sharp, shrewd woman, with a tongue that never tired.

The moment madame Coquelicot perceived Miss Nelthorpe, she flew at her, in a style of rather indignant eloquence—

"Madame,

"Madame, did you not receive my note? It is one, two, tree days since my *magazin* have been open to all de *noblesse*. Indeed dat is no using of me well, Miss Nelthorpe. I don't like ladies to come when all my best tings are sold."

"Indeed, madame, I beg ten thousand pardons," answered Miss Nelthorpe, good-humouredly; "I know I ought to have preferred your *magazin* to every other engagement; but really——"

"Oh, ma'am!" interrupted madame Coquelicot, sharply, "'tis your own loss. Dere was de new white satin *Henri Quatre*, and de *Gabrielle* ruff, and de *Echarpe à la Duchesse de Berri*—all, all gone!" lifting up her hands; "and den de new floss trimming, and de *garniture de Tulle* dat lady Doncaster admire so; and I have had all de *noblesse*—de Miss De Rosses, and——"

Here Eugénie stopped; but whether from a relenting disposition, or from the difficulty of finding another noble name, I am

am unable to determine. Miss Nelthorpe however gaily replied—"Come, come, madame Coquelicot, don't tell me of lady Doncaster's visits; for you know, if she came at all, it must have been through the window, after breaking loose from durance." This was, in fact, the unfortunate mad lady mentioned in the first chapter. "Rather, now I am here," continued Miss Nelthorpe, "shew me some of your *nouveautés*."

Madame Coquelicot prepared to comply, though she could not forbear still muttering between her teeth—"Gabrielle—*Ruche de Tulle*—Miladi Doncastre—honourable Miss De Ross," words of which none could trace the connexion who had not heard the previous dialogue.

Miss Somerville, who had been very much amused by it, found that this arbitrary priestess of the Graces took it as a heinous offence, if her provincial customers did not immediately obey her summons, and promised to herself a morning's diversion,

diversion, by observing the various modes in which she meant to treat the votaries at her shrine. Turning round, she now beheld her faithful friend, Miss Nelthorpe, struggling between the efforts of Miss Popham and Miss Mildmay, who, heedless of her face or figure, were anxiously recommending, the one a gipsy hat and flowers, and the other a dress covered all over with lilac ribbons.

"Oh, ma'am, dat hat is so becoming!" interposed madame. "Here, Miss Mildmay, do try it on. Can any ting be prettier?"

"No," replied Miss Nelthorpe; "not on Miss Mildmay's pretty face, but on mine——Excuse me, madam, I cannot purchase a restoration to favour by taking it; nor that duchess of Kent robe, Miss Popham—it is quite too troublesome and expensive for a mere morning-dress.

"Troublesome, dear ma'am! I can't think so," the voluble and ingenious milliner replied. "With care it will keep clean

clean two days; and then you have only to get your maid to pull out the nine rows of lilac ribbon, and to rip off the three flounces of lace, and it is all pulled to pieces in a minute."

"Yes, but, Miss Popham, I might wish to have a morning-dress which I could slip on without running in nine rows of ribbon, putting on three flounces of lace, and having the whole to put together every time I wear it. What is the price of this Leghorn? Oh, I see it is too small for me!"

"Too small, dear ma'am! too large, you mean!" exclaimed, in her turn, Miss Mildmay; "but it seems to me to fit you perfectly. Look here, ma'am; you have only just to take off your bonnet cap, and pull out your comb, and dress your hair differently, and we will take out the lining, and alter the front, and new-make the crown, and it will be the very thing."

Happily Miss Nelthorpe experienced a diversion from this importunity, by the entrance

entrance of her friend, Mrs. Sanderson, who, in her loud *butcherly* voice, exclaimed—"Mrs. Coquelicot, I am come to order a *Dangl'em hat*, all trimmed with nat'ral posies, and a *p'lish* of pink *grosvenor apples*; and then they tell me I shall look as young and as handsome as my daughter Lizzy."

"Oh, ma'am, de *Angoulême hat* has not been worn dis *siècle!*" answered the milliner, correcting her pronunciation in the courteous French manner; "but de pelisse of *gros de Naples* shall be put into forwardness directly. We have been so much taken up making wedding-dresses for de Miss Bugginses, dat indeed my ladies have sat up de two last nights; but still——"

"I think," interrupted Mrs. Sanderson, taking her up sharply, "you might do as much for me as for such trumpery as those. Wedding-dresses! Linen-draper's daughters indeed!"

Here

Here Eliza Sanderson sauntered over to the spot where Miss Nelthorpe and Miss Somerville stood, and the former whispered—"A sweet creature! What a pity her mother is such a *paravant!*"

Eliza Sanderson seemed disposed to accost Julia with uncommon familiarity—inquired, with interest, after her brother, and had a thousand kind things to say to Miss Nelthorpe. In short, nothing could draw her away from that attractive spot till Miss Popham said, drily—"There, Miss Sanderson, if you have no intention to buy, you have looked at those frills long enough."

Miss Somerville stood amazed at the calm impertinence of the milliner's girl, while the smooth-tongued madame Coquelicot interposed a little admonitory—"*Ah, fi donc*, Miss Pop!" as if she regretted the want of temper in her attendant.

In this, we must confess, she imitated the illustrious examples history affords of great people sacrificing their subaltern agents;

gents; for Miss Popham was placed by madame Coquelicot to guard from piracy her millinery treasures, and the little, shrewd damsel knew Miss Eliza Sanderson, of old, to be one of those ladies who have an uncommonly-quick eye at catching a new pattern, and a mind sufficiently mean to lounge in a milliner's shop, without any other intention than that of exercising the above-mentioned talent.

The disconcerted Eliza, blushing to be exposed to Miss Somerville, moved to another part of the room, when a new figure entered, who, by her manifest desire to attract attention, appeared a person of a superior order. Advancing to the only glass in the room—"*Oh, chere Coquelicot!*" she affectedly exclaimed, "where have you entombed yourself these thousand years? I am annihilated without you. What have you got new? My invention is an exhausted receiver."

"Ah, Miss Birkit," replied the complaisant milliner, "every body know *vos graces*

grâces naturelles scarcely require de assistance of *votre bon gout! Vos lys et vos roses* need not foreign aid of ornament, as your *Tonson* has it; but I am obliged to take de little trip to Paris to get de novelty for my young ladies" (she meant her assistants); "my ladies do so teaze me to get dem someting new!"

Julia looked at the new-comer, who, from the profusion of flattery addressed to her, she concluded to be a valuable customer. Miss Isabel, or, as she had, for reasons unknown, new-christened herself, Belinda Birkit, of Bear Hall, was about twenty-five years of age, and aimed at the interesting; but Nature had refused her some of the most essential attributes of that character. The colour that, mantling in her cheeks, *should* have bespoken the sensibility, mutability, &c. of her too-exquisite feelings, had, either through mistake or wilful perverseness, formed a central junction in her nose, leaving said cheeks marbled with a pleasing variety of

 purple,

purple, black, sallow, and white, which shewed, on a sharp and windy day, like the Mosaic floor of some marble-encrusted chapel; her lips, thick, dry, and of a dingy pompadour colour, reminded the observer of those arid soils in which a too-long-continued sun has made frequent fissures: still, as Isabel had good hair, good teeth, and a pretty person, she was declared, by all her female acquaintance, to be "an interesting, sweet, animated creature, and delightfully pleasant, when not shockingly nervous."

She was now torturing the patience of the two poor sub-milliners, by alternately approving and rejecting every thing submitted to her choice. *This* was old-fashioned—*that* was new, but horridly unbecoming; there was not a colour in the shop suited to her complexion; and being that day in an economical fit, she found out also that every thing was unconscionably dear.

Wearied out at length with her inces-

sant

sant caprice, Miss Popham exclaimed to her often-reiterated complaints, that nothing she tried on was becoming.—"Really, ma'am, I don't believe there is any thing in our shop that would become *you!*"

"*Fi donc*, Miss Pop!" again exclaimed madame Coquelicot, knitting her brow. But this time it was in good earnest, for she was in mortal fear of offending and losing a powerful family—no less than all the Birkits of Bear Hall. The sally, however, appeared to be unheeded by the dignified Belinda, or perhaps her consciousness of having deserved it rendered her averse to drawing the notice of others upon it; it served only to expedite her morning's transactions; and after her various criticisms, she consigned a considerable number of articles of millinery to the old family-coach that was waiting at the door.

The *superior* Jane Sanderson, who had chosen madame Coquelicot's *magazin* as

 the

the proper place for the study of a dictionary of the Spanish language, and, with a book in her hand, had hitherto seemed as abstracted as an Indian fakeer from all that was going on, no sooner perceived Isabella Birkit at liberty to attend to her, than she went up and whispered something in her ear. Advancing afterwards to Julia—" Miss Somerville," she said, " allow me the pleasure of introducing to you my dearest and most intimate friend; she will tell you herself how much she hopes that Mrs. Birkit will assist her in cultivating your acquaintance."

She then proceeded to inform Julia of Miss Isabella Birkit's reasons for adopting the more sentimental Christian name of Belinda, and concluded her eulogium, much to the astonishment of the two milliners misses, with reciting aloud the following apostrophe, which she applied to the attachment subsisting between herself and her friend—

" Celestial

"Celestial Happiness! whene'er she stoops
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
And one alone, to make her sweet amends
For absent heaven—the bosom of a friend*."

From this Julia understood that she was to consider Jane Sanderson and Isabella or Belinda Birkit as sworn and sentimental friends, and prepared to wait with patience the visit from her mother, which was thus pompously announced.

Meanwhile the ladies were preparing to leave the shop, when madame Coquelicot, anxious to attract more of Julia's attention, displayed to her view a very elegant scarf, and began recommending it with her utmost eloquence. It might perhaps have succeeded, but, unfortunately, at the very moment that madame Coquelicot was complacently setting forth its merits, as a perfect novelty from Paris, Julia recognised the fashion of it as having been herself its inventress, when, three years before, she had reigned the momentary

* Young.

tary and idolized goddess of *ton*, and a fashionable milliner had entreated permission to sell it with her name.

The recollections united with her change of situation were too serious—I had almost said too dreadful, not to form a shocking contrast with the light subject that called them forth; but an involuntary expression of Julia's countenance, which shewed the experienced foreigner either that she recognised the article, or at least was aware of her deceit, made madame Coquelicot as eager to get her out of her *magazin de modes* as she had been but a moment before to flatter and tempt her.—"Ah! mademoiselle come from *Londres!*" she said; "it so difficult to please dose who have been in de *grand monde;* dey see so much variety, noting is *nouveauté;* and perhaps," she concluded, with an air of exemplary innocence, "I may have been deceived, but dey sell it me ver dear for de new invented scarf, just manufacture *à* Lyons."

Infinitely

Infinitely to the relief of the innocent deceived Eugenia, the loud voice of Mrs. Sanderson was heard calling—"Come, girls! Mary, Jane, Nelly, Lizzy! if you don't make haste, we shall be too late for the *libery*, and I want to get that good book as Jane was recommending of me to read. I do love reading, it is such a gentlewomanlike employment. Jenny, what was the name of the book, love? Oh! now I recollect, it was Cyclops in Search of a Wife."

"Cœlebs," said Jane, taking a hint from the Frenchwoman to insinuate a polite correction, "is a very superior work." And with these words the ladies sallied forth from the milliner's.

As if she was destined that day to see all the humours of Rothbury, Miss Nelthorpe vehemently urged to Julia the propriety of accompanying the library party. Miss Somerville took the opportunity of asking her if the circulating library was well supplied?

"Bless your soul! this is not a circulating library!" replied Miss Nelthorpe—"it is our book-society. I believe there is some such establishment in most towns. About a dozen families have subscribed for these twenty years—so you may suppose we have a pretty good number of books. To be sure, as, according to our rules, every subscriber may order whatever book he fancies, they are not very well selected. For instance, Mr. Birkit, of Bear Hall, ordered the Racing Calendar, which fills the whole lower row, and might as well be so many wooden volumes. My lord Lulworth ordered the History of the Lulworth Peerage, into which nobody, not even the members of his own family, ever look; and his lady—but, rest her soul! she is dead now—used to bore us a little, by persuading us to take all the works of a twelfth cousin of hers, a 'very clever woman,' as she was always designated by the family, who used, to our annoyance, to produce a voluminous

luminous novel or romance every year, which she published by subscription, but which nobody, not even her subscribers, ever pretended to be able to read."

This short sketch of the state of literature at Rothbury brought them to the public library, where Mr. Type, the librarian, who also kept a shop, nominally attended, but was as negligent to all others as he was obsequious to the presiding family of Lulworth.

Julia looked over several of the books; some were dirtied and torn, others wanted a leaf, or half the cover; all were in a forlorn, injured, neglected condition. Besides Mr. Type, the librarian, the book-society had to boast a secretary, who never attended; a treasurer, who kept no accounts; and a committee, that never met. All the three estates seemed agreed upon the propriety of joining to illustrate the saying—"What is every body's business is nobody's business." Miss Somerville asked for a catalogue; there was no such

thing to be had. Mr. Type had indeed begun one some years ago, he said; but so many books were out, so many lost or missing, and so many never to be accounted for, that he had long desisted from the Herculean labour.

In the library-room there were several of the inhabitants of Rothbury. Mr. Tom Birkit, for reasons best known to himself, asked for Calamities of Authors.

Mr. Type had his ready answer—"Out."

"Rejected Addresses?"

"Not at home."

Eliza Sanderson asked for Celia in Search of a Husband.

Gone that morning to Torpington Castle.

"Coquetry?"

"Well, Miss Sanderson," said Mr. Type, "I can let you have that."

Eliza, believing herself secure of an entertaining book, triumphantly saw the three volumes set aside, and inscribed for her.

Mrs. Sanderson now pushed forward, and,

and, in spite of her daughter Jane's hints and admonitions, intrepidly demanded—"Cyclops in Search of a Wife."

"I wonder, mamma," said Tom Birkit, addressing her by a name he often gave her, "you can like that greatest compendium of commonplaces that ever prosed itself into popularity—a work which, with the sour-visaged rigour of puritanism, condemns our heaven-given taste for the cultivation of the liberal arts, to exalt in every page the evangelical pleasures of eating. Then the endless repetitions! They say Mr. Fox's copy of Gibbon was curious and valuable, from his having drawn his pen through every unnecessary epithet which occurs in that florid writer. In like manner, in reading Cœlebs, I had a mind to mark every one of the numerous times that 'Mr. Stanley smiled.' Again, how familiarly profane the introductory comparison between a gentleman, calling unexpectedly to dine with a friend, and Adam's archangelic guest, the beautiful

and sociable Raphael! How out of all truth and nature the young ladies Cœlebs first meets in London, who inform him of their reading the Fortunate Footman, and Jenny and Jemmy Jessamy! What a pedantic puppy he was himself, to have been repeating quotations, as he rolled along, in order to bolt them out in the first society he met with in London! How insupportable the dull Astons, and how ridiculous the story of lady Melbury's hanging up in her dressing-room a picture of the ruined Stokes's, like Berquin's little tale of Negligent Nancy and her Bird Cherry!"

How long Tom Birkit (who, it is but justice to hint, was himself a disappointed author) would have continued to rail at this justly-admired performance, it is impossible to tell; for the sight of a landau and four put the master and shop-boys into the most visible commotion. In the front-seats were two fashionably-dressed young women, and on the other, a matron-

ly

ly gentlewoman, on whose shoulder a lovely girl, the plainness of whose dress announced her to be *not out*, was reposing. The little sleeper, who seemed about fifteen or sixteen, appeared to have been overcome by the heat of the sun in an open carriage, which was indeed on that day oppressive; she had taken off her bonnet, and her flaxen hair fell in a profusion of beautiful ringlets. This was Caroline De Ross, lord Lulworth's youngest daughter; and the other three ladies were Mrs. Northey, her governess, and the honourable Misses Emma and Laura De Ross.

Already was Mr. Type at the carriage-door, beseeching the ladies to honour the library with their presence; his eldest son stood at the steps—the most commodious seat in the shop was brought out for the languid Caroline. Every novelty was spread before the other two ladies, and even Mrs. Northey's spectacles were complimented with the ready offer of an Edinburgh Review.

What

"What is the meaning of this, Mr. Type?" the sprightly Emma began. "You are absolutely determined I shall be as ignorant as a dairy-maid; I never can get the book I want."

"I believe, ma'am, there are a few books now at Torpington Castle," answered the librarian, bowing low, and in a submissive tone; "and you know a single set, according to the rules——"

"Oh, I hate rules!" interrupted Emma.

"And so do I," added Laura.

Mrs. Northey frowned.

The librarian continued, looking over a large book—"There are now at Torpington Castle, 'Celia,' and 'The Scottish Chiefs,' and 'Glenarvon,' and 'Letters to Julia,' 'Lord Valentia's Travels,' and 'Varieties of Life,' 'The Fudge Family,' and 'The Antiquary."

"Mr. Type, I'll have this," said Laura De Ross, pointing to the novel of "Coquetry," which still lay on the counter, directed to Eliza Sanderson, who, with her mother

mother and family, had quitted the library.

"I beg ten thousand pardons, ma'am," the obsequious shopkeeper replied; "but that is already engaged to a young lady who is just gone away."

"Well, the *young lady* can choose something else!" exclaimed Laura, giving her head an admirable aristocratic toss. "Here, Benjamin," to one of the footmen, "put *that*, and 'Letters from India,' into the carriage."

"Oh, Miss De Ross! you can do what you please with me; but what shall I say to poor Miss Sanderson? It really goes against my conscience."

Laura did not seem to hear the faint remonstrance of the conscientious Mr. Type; and after a few more frivolous remarks and fastidious complaints, the noble party left the library, and were, by the complaisant librarian, bowed out of sight.

The day after Julia's rencontre with Miss Belinda Birkit in the milliner's shop, she

she received a visit from Mrs. Birkit, of Bear Hall, which she returned as soon as decorum demanded.

Miss Nelthorpe had prepared her for a little variety and confusion at this seat of ancient hospitality, but still the reality surpassed her description. At her entrance, Mrs. Birkit rose to receive Miss Somerville, and presented her anew to Isabella, who was busily employed painting on velvet, and to her eldest daughter, Miss Birkit, who was sitting at a table covered with maps, globes, mathematical instruments, and elementary books upon all subjects. Around the room were dispersed a group of children of different ages, her younger brothers and sisters.

Each of these little philosophers was employed upon some different object; one was fixing a large fly within a microscope, to see if it was not an elephant; another, with his face and hands begrimmed with printers ink, was practising, at a miniature printing-press of his own, the elements of that

that useful trade; while a third was, with or without permission, busily employed dissecting a watch, in order to detect the spring that set it going. The only person unemployed in the assembly was a venerable old lady, who might be eighty years of age, but who had none of the imbecility of accumulated years. This was lady Penmawr, the mother of Mrs. Birkit, and grandmother of the numerous family that occupied the Hall. She sat apart from the possibility of annoyance, at a little table of her own, but looked cheerfully on at the scene, and was the only person in the family who inspired Julia with any degree of interest. She observed, also, with pleasure, that though the "young bears," as Miss Nelthorpe unceremoniously termed them, were sufficiently rude and noisy to others, they seemed emulous to treat their grandmother with attention and respect. Indeed, the deference due to old age is so natural a sentiment, that mere want of polish

lish can never suspend its force in an unsophisticated human bosom.

Miss Charity Birkit, for that was the name of the eldest, now called the attention of Julia to the useful nature of her brothers' employments, and began explaining the great advantage of a philosophical over a classical education, when she was interrupted by a loud scream from Mrs. Birkit, and the exclamation—"Bless me! you have ruined me, child!"

Her little daughter Mary Anne, to whom this was addressed, seemed unconscious of the commission of any error; all the ladies however crowded round Mrs. Birkit, and found that the damage was occasioned by her gown having been suddenly sprinkled by the child with spirit of vitriol.—"How came you to do such a thing?" reiterated Mrs. Birkit, more violently. "Didn't you know, child, that vitriol dropped upon my dress would destroy it?"

"Sister

"Sister told me so," replied Mary Anne, with the calm countenance of a female philosopher; "but I wished to ascertain it by experiment."

"Lord ha' mercy! where did the child learn such long words? and she runs them off as glibly as her sister could do," continued the fond mother, almost forgetting her cause of anger in her child's proficiency.—"But how now, Henrietta? Come hither, my little darling! you look just fresh from the greenhouse!"

A little girl, with her hair dishevelled, and a curious plant in her hand, flew to her mother. It was a blossom of the night-blowing ceres grandiflora, not quite come to perfection, and broken short off. —"Look, mamma! pulled all head off!" lisped the little simpleton; "pull all head to pieces, and then dissect it *systemcally*, as sister Chary calls it."

"My beautiful night-blowing ceres!" cried Mrs. Birkit, in a rueful voice, "that I watched to the moment of its blowing, and

and designed, Miss Somerville, as a present to you! You know how rarely this flower is seen in perfection, and how short its duration is—and to have it in a moment destroyed!"

Julia, who was really fond of children, warmly pleaded the cause of the young botanist, and had nearly succeeded, when, interrupted by Mrs. Birkit's youngest boy, a fine little fellow, of between five and six years old, who ran up to her with the watch at which he had been industriously working for an hour.—"See here, mother! found it out at last!" he cried, triumphantly shewing the dismembered piece of mechanism—"found out the spring that sets all going!"

"Your father's favourite watch!" said Mrs. Birkit, with a look of despair. "What upon earth shall we do?—we must instantly send to *the man*—how fortunate your father is absent!—perhaps we may be able to put it together before he returns."

To

To the dismay and confusion of the little mechanist, these consolatory words had hardly been uttered when a shout was heard in the hall, sufficient to have shaken its foundations; and Mrs. Birkit, turning as pale as death, exclaimed—"Good Heavens! your father is returned!"

In order to enable the reader to conceive the distress that this sudden information excited, he must be informed that squire Birkit, of Bear Hall, was supposed to have been safely lodged for a week at a brother squire's, twenty miles off, on a shooting visit; and it was the custom of his terrified family, on those occasions, to exercise themselves on the various employments that he positively interdicted when present.

> "Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
> And gathering tears and tremblings of distress."

Charity Birkit, with fruitless care, threw a shawl over the globes, books, and microscopes; Mrs. Birkit hurried the dismembered watch into her pocket; while little James,

James, the printer, hastened out of the room, that he might remove the stains of ink from off his face and clothes.

Never did a father's return appear to create less felicity among the members of his family; and Miss Somerville, judging, from the specimen she saw, that they would wish the endearments succeeding his reception to pass without witnesses, took advantage of the hurlyburly to make her parting curtsey and return home.

Scarcely had she turned her back on Bear Hall when the formidable master of it strode into the room. He was a gigantic-looking man, attired as a true, not as a fashionable sportsman. From beneath his shaggy brows he cast a ferocious glance around; and after throwing his gaiters in the middle of the room, and his game-bag across Isabella's velvet painting, began, in a thundering voice, what shall be read in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

> Since trifles make the sum of human things,
> And half our misery from our foibles springs,
> Oh! let th' ungentle spirit learn from thence
> A small unkindness is a great offence.
>
> Mrs. H. More.

"Son! here's a fine piece of business for a man to come home to! The devil has shook his club over my whole family in my absence, I find! Miss Bell was to have flitted to-night, Charity to have converted the Hall into an academy of Pestalozzi's; and you, madam," turning to his wife, "and that old woman there in the corner, were worthily employed in abetting and counselling your daughter's vagaries."

Isabel, with tears, denied any intention of an elopement, though she acknowledged that a lover, the most worthy, and the most

most cruelly treated by her father, had availed himself of his absence to take one last, long farewell.

Charity could not so easily justify herself; the proofs of her delinquency lay upon the table.

"Did I not," exclaimed Mr. Birkit, again raising his voice, "positively lay my commands on you to have no more of this nonsense? What is the use of boys risking their lives with retorts and crucibles, who are not intended for chemists, and learning the names of all the herbs in the Pharmacopœia, unless they are breeding up for apothecaries? There is James, who can hardly read a line of print but his own, and would be an hour casting up a common account. It is all pride, daughter Charity, and the desire of exhibiting your new-fangled systems of education. Didn't you once call up James and Harry, in the middle of the night, to be questioned, by some of your philosophical travellers, in history, chronology, conchology, and doc-

tor

tor Darwin's new-invented mode of turning blackamoors white? and didn't the poor boys, being awakened out of their first sleep, talk some nonsense, as how diamonds were not precious stones, and explain centripetal force to mean an army of centipedes?"

Charity blushed at being thus rudely reprimanded, and Tom Birkit, who had entered during his father's harangue, undertook to intercede for his sister, of whom he was really fond.—"My dear sir," said he, "you vex poor Charity more than you intend, I am sure. See, she is in tears! Do, dear father, be mild and gentle with the poor girl."

"Mild and gentle!" vociferated squire Birkit, in a rage. "Why, death and fury! I *am* mild and gentle; and, hark ye, Tom, if ever you use that word to your father again, I will knock your head and the wall together, to see which is the softest."

Tom dexterously flew on one side, as if

he fully expected this threat to be followed by consequences; and Miss Somerville, had she witnessed this, the habitual behaviour of a father in the midst of his grown-up family, would no longer have wondered at his son's ideas of propriety were not very refined.

At supper, Mr. Birkit renewed the attack upon his wife; the wildfowl was overdone, and the neck of venison not near so well dressed as at squire Meadows's; and what upon earth was she good for, if it was not to dress venison? Then reverting to another subject of displeasure—"I hear, madam," he said, sternly knitting his brow, "that Isabel appeared at lord Lulworth's in a set of your ornaments. I questioned Jenny the maid who dressed her."

To what meannesses will not tyrants descend!

"I acknowledge it, my dear," replied Mrs. Birkit, in a trembling voice: "but, as the girls have scarcely any, and your

goodness

goodness has supplied me with more ornaments than I want, I could see no possible harm in——"

"*You* could see!" retorted Mr. Birkit, contemptuously; "who ever said that you had either eyes, ears, or understanding? I think it was sufficient that *I* saw harm in it—aye, and positively forbade your lending from yourself any article of jewellery that I, in my bounty, had been pleased to bestow upon you! This venison is execrable! Let us have in the cockles!"

A dish of black cockles was brought in —a sort of food which was sometimes a favourite with the squire; but on this occasion there was something in the boiling which displeased him, and for which Mrs. Birkit in vain endeavoured to apologize.

"I tell you, madam," he repeated, "it is an atrocious thing; I can never get a dish of black cockles to my mind; and for what do I feed and clothe and shelter you and that old woman," meaning lady Penmawr,

mawr, "if it is not to boil black cockles for my supper?"

Mrs. Birkit sighed at this brief exposition of the whole duty of a wife and mother-in-law; and the squire, turning his back upon her, called for his nightcap, and the last number of The Examiner.

In former days Mrs. Birkit had what is indulgently termed "a spirit of her own;" and had she been matched to a man of more gentleness, might, perhaps, now have been acting the tyrant's part, instead of suffering from it; but Mr. Birkit, of Bear Hall, had fairly obtained the mastery, and petrified a vixen to a drudge. All her time was taken up either with studying how to vary the elegances of his table, or making pastry for "the gentlemen of the hunt."

The hunting season was notwithstanding a period of gala to Mrs. Birkit, as her husband's companions, though rude, were not so rude as he; and the hours they spent

spent at her house were almost the only ones in which she heard the accents of civility from any human being. The fastidiousness of her husband's taste could only be equalled by the narrowness of his mind; so that he denied her those supplies, and that assistance, suited to her rank in life, at the same time that he insisted his establishment should boast an air of plenty and elegance. The same narrowness made it death to him to part with the necessary sum for the education of his boys; he rather suffered them to run about the house, and pick up what knowledge their eldest sister could impart to them; while he affected to growl at her newfangled methods of teaching.

Poor Charity indeed had set about the task with more zeal than discretion. An enthusiast to the new ideas, it was her firm belief, that the human mind was equally capable of grasping every acquirement; though, in her own case, her study of botany went little farther than arran-

ging the flowers on the mantlepiece—or of history, than the tittle-tattle of the town; her zoology terminated in combing the lapdog—her chemistry, in making tea—her architecture, in building castles in the air—and her mathematics, in cutting watch-papers. Still she was determined, with the aid of every help invented for infant minds, to make her little brothers and sisters prodigious geniuses. They were furnished with catechisms, and ladders, and short cuts to learning, without end—their tongues were much exercised, and their minds little—they knew the name of every thing, and the nature of none; already one was, in his own opinion, an astronomer, another an herbalist, and a third an experimental philosopher. All were very superficial and very conceited.

Isabel, or Belinda, as we have already hinted, was too much occupied with a passion of her own, to second her sister's endeavours. This was for a young West Indian,

Indian, who had been consigned to the care of Mr. Birkit the preceding summer.

If Mr. Tornado raised a hurricane in the bosom of the gentle Isabel, he did not escape a storm on the part of Mr. Birkit, the father, who declared, that not a drop of black blood should intermingle with his family, and, as the young gentleman was a Creole, sternly forbade him to think of her more. It was on this man's account that he had reproached her that very morning; and Isabel was indeed very sad, for she had just received Mr. Tornado's last farewell. When her spirits were tolerable, she also cultivated her taste, but in a manner different from her sister.

Without either genius or talent, Belinda Birkit had all those knacks which are often more valued. She had no taste for drawing, nor knowledge of perspective, but could take off a sketch through the light, and paint on velvet to a miracle, with the *slight* assistance of *the man's* just tracing the outline, and directing what

colours should be rubbed in; she could colour blown eggshells like spar, scratch in imitation of bronze, and make mock japan figures on boxes prepared for the purpose; she could cut card fans like ivory, make straw bracelets like gold; and was well versed in all those valuable compositions of gum, pasteboard, gold paper, pink paper, black, blue, and green paper, which, when they rise out of their chaos, in the form of needle, card, and letter cases, the enraptured author looks on with complacency, exclaiming—"*Anch' io son' pittore!* *Au reste*, besides the accomplished and interesting, Isabel aimed at being thought a wit, though she had not yet burst upon the strangers in that alarming character. Such was the family of Bear Hall, with whom that of the Lodge were engaged to spend the ensuing Thursday.

"It is a pity papa is so stingy, and at the same time so particular," observed Belinda Birkit to her maid, on talking over this invitation. "There will be Miss Somerville,

merville, most elegantly dressed, and I have scarcely any ornaments to match my gown. What possible harm could it do him to let mamma lend me her pearls? Though, upon second thoughts," she added, "I regret her necklaces the less, they are all so old-fashioned; and Miss Somerville tells me nothing but *negligées* are worn now."

Just as Isabella finished this speech, she passed from her own room to lady Penmawr's, which joined hers, and found, to her great surprise, that the old lady had overheard her last words; for, kissing her kindly on the cheek, she said—"Don't fret, my child; you shall not want a *negligée*, since they are the fashion, if your old grandmother can procure you one."

Isabel felt a glow of gratitude towards the aged and venerable matron, for thus entering into her trifling sorrows; she was lady Penmawr's favourite, and had been often obliged to her for little presents of money and trinkets; still she could not

rely much on the taste of an old lady of eighty, who had spent her whole life in the country, and whose ideas, from the remoteness of her situation, were still more antiquated than even her style of dress and appearance.

Bell could not but perceive, however, that a great deal of consultation was going on between lady Penmawr and her maid Prue; they were frequently shut up together in her ladyship's chamber, and she doubted not the subject under discussion was the choice of the most valuable jewellery Rothbury could produce; and that, on the important day, she was to be favoured with one of those family surprises which are always anticipated, and more than suspected, by the object of them.—"Well," thought Isabel, "but for lady Penmawr, I should be in despair, for I spent my last shilling at Eugénie Coquelicot's. See what it is to have a good grandmother!"

At length Thursday came, and with it the

the venerable Prue, almost as ancient a spinster as her mistress was a matron. With a look of mysterious satisfaction, she told the young lady that her grandmother wanted her, but could not forbear adding, while they were on the stairs—"I think, Miss, you *will* be pleased."

Isabel entered lady Penmawr's apartment, and was received by the old lady with a smile of unusual pleasure. Her head always shook slightly, but this did not prevent a degree of vivacity from still beaming in her eyes.—"My dear child," she said, "here is the *negligée* I promised you. I intended to leave it you at my death, but it is better you should have it now; you shall wear it to-day for my sake."

Isabella turned round, and beheld, spread out upon a canopy-bed, a flowing robe of green brocade, on the ground of which was wrought, to the life, various figures of stags, horses, and huntsmen, followed by the hounds in full cry.—"This,

my dear," said her ladyship, smiling, "is my forest gown. It was bequeathed to me by my mother, and I wore it the first day I saw sir Humphrey Penmawr, when the gentlemen serenaded the ladies with horn music after hunting. It was intended to be spread upon a hoop; but as I find *negligées* are coming in again, Prue has been this week employed, under my direction, in cutting it into that shape. Do, girl, try it on your young lady; I declare it gives you quite an air!"

What were Isabel's feelings on discovering her grandmother's mistake! her dismay defies description. She knew lady Penmawr was very tenacious of her presents being valued and worn; at length she ventured to explain.

Lady Penmawr was at first a little ruffled, but soon recovered her wonted kindliness again. She however could not help exclaiming—"Ah, Bell! those were better times when a valuable gown descended, like an heirloom, from mother

to

to daughter; and instead of your flimsy muslins, we might have a whole history spread upon a hoop!"

Though disappointed in her hopes of shining by dress, Isabella's spirits rose as the guests arrived that were invited to meet the Somervilles. They were judged sufficient, in the evening, to make out a dance; and Miss Birkit, leading off with Mr. Somerville, found the advantage of her name in the often-repeated joke of "Charity begins at home." Her brother Tom seemed determined to make the most of it; and anxious to be distinguished in Miss Somerville's eyes, was more absurdly eccentric than even at Miss Ravenshawe's.

Julia, remembering what Miss Nelthorpe told her, of his really possessing talents, could not repress a feeling of indignation at his wanton abuse of them. This feeling spoke in her eloquent eyes, and in a moment damped our wit's affected

vivacity.

vivacity. Its influence was great; for, without designing or wishing it, Julia had made a conquest.

CHAPTER VI.

> Hear'st thou not the raven's croak?
> See'st thou not the blasted oak?
> Feel'st thou not the loaded sky?
> Read thy danger, then, and fly. AIKIN.

As all Rothbury had visited and invited them, the Somervilles thought it their duty to invite all Rothbury in return. The arrangement included both a dinner and evening party, and all was going on, or going off (which ever the reader pleases), as well as possible, when Mr. Lascelles, who had been detained from the dinner party by professional duty, rather late in the evening, walked in.

A chill

A chill damp seemed to come over a great number of the company. Mrs. Mapletoft sidled, like a parrot along his perch, to the greatest possible distance; Miss Rosilda Ravenshawe bridled, fanned herself, and walked to the window in manifest perturbation; her niece, the beautiful Amelia, turned red and pale, and pale and red, twenty times in a minute; but the effect of his presence on Mr. Tom Birkit was the most remarkable, for that gentleman was seized with a violent bleeding at the nose, and obliged, with his handkerchief in his hand, hastily to leave the room.

Miss Somerville's chief attention was, of course, directed towards the suffering Amelia, whose agitation had, by this time, increased to such an hysterical degree, as to render it necessary her young hostess should invite her into the dressing-room. Here a burst of tears seemed to afford her some relief; and having swallowed some drops, she at length attempted an apology for her conduct.—" I am ashamed of my want

want of self-command, Somerville," she said; "my behaviour must appear to you so weak and incomprehensible; but it is so long since I have been in the same room with that man—that Mr. Lascelles—his sudden appearance among us excited such emotions——"

Julia involuntarily let go the hand she, till now, had held.

Amelia resumed—"Such emotions of dislike—of repugnance!"

Again Julia's hand was locked in that of Amelia.—"My dear, *dear* Miss De Ross, well really this is something incomprehensible! But if, as you say, you dislike Mr. Lascelles so excessively, I will take care, my dear creature, you shall never meet again. Do you feel equal to returning to the company?"

"Oh yes, I think so," replied Amelia, faintly. "If it had been at church, you know, I should not have minded; but meeting him in private is quite a different thing."

The

The guests assembled in the drawing-room had resumed their former situations. Mr. Tom Birkit had recovered the shock into which he had been thrown. "A little water clear'd him of this deed."

Julia could not forbear stealing a glance towards the involuntary author of the disturbance, but tried in vain to detect, in his countenance, the smallest sign of self-reproach. He was standing in conversation with a venerable old gentleman, who seemed to belong to the neutral party; and though a degree of concentrated haughtiness, if not disdain, for a moment marked his fine features, as his eye encountered those of his enemies, the expression had immediately given place to one more becoming a gentleman and a Christian.

Cards soon reduced the whole company to a level, and Miss Somerville managed that Mr. Lascelles should be the partner of the venerable old gentleman. A degree of constraint, however, marked the remainder

remainder of the evening; and the greatest satisfaction Julia received from it was this lesson of experience, never, in the country, to invite people together, whom she had not previously met at each other's houses.

The next morning she devoted to arranging her books in a small sitting-room, which her brother had given up for her use. Horatio assisted in the consultation, till obliged to go out on an appointment; and on reviewing the incidents of the preceding evening, the brother and sister could not forbear commenting on the strange perverseness of the females of the place, to whom ill-breeding, forwardness, and folly, seemed a recommendation; while the only man of merit among them was shunned like a pestilence, and left, as he himself had expressed it, to endure as he might his joyless existence alone.

After her brother's departure, these reflections still occupied Julia's mind, till the arrival of a female visitor, Miss Belinda

linda Birkit. She came to talk over the party of the preceding evening, and had not tact enough to avoid an allusion disagreeable to her hostess.—"It was a most agreeable day," she observed; "at least we were all so pleasant till that Mr. Lascelles came in!"

Julia determined to avail herself of her ill-breeding to ask some questions respecting Lascelles.—"He does not seem in high favour," she observed.

"Favour! He wants no favours from any body," retorted Miss Belinda Birkit. "By the care of his friend, lord Rothbury, he is amply provided for."

"I mean," resumed Julia, thinking she really misunderstood her, "Mr. Lascelles appears to stand with many in an unfavourable light."

"Light! It was almost dark when he came in—he, he, he!" resumed the wit. "To be sure there is such a thing as standing in one's own light; but *that* Mr. Lascelles was never accused of—ha, ha, ha!"

Julia

Julia was perfectly overpowered by this unexpected display of country wit. She had yet to learn that Miss Belinda aspired to emulate her ingenious brother, and so far surpassed him in this sort of snip-snap war, that she would have been no contemptible assistant in contriving to puzzle a cause. Julia was not quite discouraged; she asked—"How long has Mr. Lascelles lived here?"

"Here!" repeated Miss Bell, with her usual little lively shriek; "Mr. Lascelles never lived here!"

"I mean," resumed the fair questioner, a little disconcerted, "how long has he lived at Rothbury?"

"I beg your pardon; I thought you meant the Lodge—he, he, he! Mr. Lascelles never lived at Rothbury."

"And yet," resumed Julia, disgusted by the pertinacious ill-breeding with which Miss Birkit seemed determined to pervert her words, "he is styled rector of Rothbury."

"Yes,

"Yes, my dear; but Ivied Porch is half-a-mile out of the town—Mr. Lascelles is not an inhabitant of the town of Rothbury."

"His situation must be unpleasant," continued Julia, with an absent air.

"Unpleasant! Ivied Porch fronts the south. He has the finest exposure possible for wall-fruit. Nobody can call it an unpleasant situation—he, he!"

"I do not mean the *emplacement* of his house," resumed Miss Somerville, quite provoked, "but the terms on which he is with his neighbours; *that* would render any situation unpleasant."

"*Emplacement!*" repeated Miss Bell, deridingly. "Oh, it is very possible his situation may be unpleasant in *French*, but every one allows it to be charming in *English*—ha, ha, ha!"

Finding it impossible to get a rational answer from one so determinately unpolite as Miss Bell, Julia desisted from the ungrateful attempt; and then the lady informed

formed her, of her own accord, of the history of Mrs. Mapletoft's grievances, slightly touched upon some law dispute between Mr. Lascelles and her brother Tom; and concluded with saying, the disorder of Miss Ravenshawe and Miss De Ross arose from their near connexion with him by marriage, for that he had run away with a daughter of lord Lulworth's, Miss Anna De Ross.

Here Julia became all attention, she would have willingly demanded a fuller explanation; but at this moment Miss Birkit rose to take leave, on hearing another visitor announced—it was Miss Nelthorpe.

Miss Somerville hoped the communicative little lady would make her amends for what she lost by the departure of Miss Birkit; but, somehow or other, Miss Nelthorpe had no inclination to gratify her curiosity; she even seemed to repent the few words she had dropped on a former occasion. In fact, unpromising as this lady's

lady's appearance was, she was too deeply implicated in the singular fate of Lascelles not to feel much uneasiness on reverting to past transactions—"What's Hecuba to her, or she to Hecuba?"

This was very true; yet it is equally certain, that Julia's curiosity increased in exact proportion with the difficulty of gratifying it. It was a strange thing to see a young man, of apparently the most amiable disposition and correct deportment, placed in a sacred relation with regard to others, yet shunned and avoided. A kind of gloomy mystery seemed to hang over Anna's fate. Whether from fear of lord Ladworth, or consideration for Mr. Lascelles, the country neighbours did little more than sigh, shrug, shake their heads, and say—"It was a sad business," the few times the hateful subject was mentioned.

Gossiping with servants and inferiors Julia held in dignified abhorrence. She saw that Lascelles was severely judged by his equals, and also remarked, from the looks

looks interchanged between him and lord Lulworth's family in public, and the dislike manifested by Amelia and Miss Ravenshawe, that he derived no consolation from his fashionable connexions.

Miss Nelthorpe was succeeded by Miss Ravenshawe.—" I am come, madam," she began, with much formality, " to account for the scene which my too-susceptible, and, I must say, my imprudent niece, Miss De Ross, gave last night, to my infinite regret, at your house. A young lady of her rank in life ought to have more command over her feelings."

Julia thought so too.

" You are young—very young, Miss Somerville," resumed Miss Ravenshawe; " and though, no doubt, a very superior young lady—very superior to us all, nobody makes any doubt of that, it may not be amiss to warn you against an artful and unprincipled character. If, madam, you approve of the bad husband—the unnatural father—the base preceptor——" Miss Ravenshawe's

venshawe's voice rose *in alt* as she enumerated each separate count of this accusation, and by the time she came to the last, it amounted to a scream—"if you approve of the base preceptor and the perfidious friend——"

"Dear, what a malicious creature it is!" thought Julia. "I wish she would leave her epithets, and come to the point."

This was what Miss Ravenshawe intended.—"In that case," she resumed, "there is nothing further to be urged against Mr. Lascelles. Having been highly recommended to my sainted sister, the late lady Lulworth, he was introduced into our family as travelling-tutor to my eldest nephew, Mr. De Ross. Their intended continental tour was shortened by my nephew's illness, which rendered it necessary he should return to his native air; but he was so infatuated with Mr. Lascelles, that he made it his earnest request he should continue to enjoy his company at Torpington Castle. Lord and

 lady

lady Lulworth could not oppose the wishes of a beloved and suffering son and heir, and Mr. Lascelles was domesticated in the family. Fatal compliance! He had not been three months at the castle when he made himself master of the affections of my angel niece, Anna De Ross—a creature who, till that moment, had lived only to anticipate her parents' slightest wishes. Their correspondence was, of course, broken off, and all intercourse at an end between Mr. Lascelles and my brother-in-law; but some time afterwards, I am ashamed to say, he prevailed on my niece, in defiance of the commands of her whole family, to become his wife.

"Mr. Lascelles is, as I acknowledge, and as you yourself, Miss Somerville, I dare say, will allow, a young man of a fine person and insinuating address. What could a poor innocent girl of sixteen, like my niece, oppose to his artifices? The only atonement that now remained for him to make was to have devoted himself

to

to her happiness; but, alas! my angel niece had almost immediate cause to repent her ill-starred marriage. My sainted sister did not long survive the catastrophe, and Amelia never can see, without feelings of the deepest indignation, the destroyer of her sister, to whom he does not even allow the consolation which the society of her little girl might afford her."

"What!" exclaime Julia, with irrepressible curiosity, "Mrs. Lascelles lives then, but they are parted?"

Miss Ravenshawe looked as if she had said more than she intended, blushed, bridled, and at length laconically replied—"Yes, they *are* parted."

Here she seemed inclined to drop the subject, but it was now Julia's turn to be inquisitive.—"At least, madam," she said, "I am told Mr. Lascelles owes his preferment in the church to his merit, and the admiration which lord Rothbury, the patron of his living, felt (though personally unknown to him) upon the perusal of some

lectures of his, which had obtained the prize at college."

"No such thing, ma'am," resumed Miss Ravenshawe; "lord Rothbury is just such another as himself, and it was an old college friendship. I only thought it right to warn you—I thought it right to warn you, Miss Somerville, but should not be in the least surprised if my good intentions were misunderstood. Mr. Lascelles is an artful pleader, and has 'a tongue would wheedle with the devil."

As she pronounced these words, the usually sedate, dignified Miss Ravenshawe became animated, her eyes flashed fire, her voice once more rose into a scream; and to give her denunciation more effect, she unconsciously rose in her seat, and struck both her hands forcibly upon the table.

She would now have entered into some commonplace chat, but Julia had had enough for that day; so, after a few faint and constrained efforts to support a languid

guid conversation, Miss Ravenshawe's footman was summoned, and the stately lady took leave. Her departure was to Julia like the removal of a horrible night-mare, but it was a nightmare that left an inconceivable oppression behind. And was it possible?—was the character of worth, of candour, and magnanimity, so indelibly written on that fine countenance, deceitful? Julia felt ready, with Miranda, to exclaim—

> "There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple;
> If the ill spirit have so fair a house,
> Good things will strive to dwell with't."

And, after all, of what did Miss Ravenshawe complain? That a girl of sixteen had found Mr. Lascelles agreeable, and that he, on his part, had not been able to resist "an angel;" for as such she had repeatedly characterized her niece.

Aye, but facts—painful facts!—the succeeding part of the story. What could she say to his want of worth, so repeatedly and positively asserted?—Nothing, but

 that

that she felt it impossible to believe guilt could reside with or around him.

Notwithstanding Miss Ravenshawe's vehemence, she had failed to produce complete conviction; enough, however, remained on Julia's mind greatly to alter her opinion of Mr. Lascelles; while the discovery that he was a married man, though parted from his wife (a circumstance so uncommon in a clergyman, and in the country), made her determine to avoid the least appearance of intimacy with him, except in the presence of her brother.

That beloved brother, on his return home, soon perceived something had happened to disconcert his little Julia. He affectionately asked if she had had any visitors during his absence.

"None—of any consequence. Miss Birkit, Miss Nelthorpe—Miss (the worst always comes last)—Miss Ravenshawe—"

"Miss Ravenshawe—she's a wonderfully-entertaining personage; I hope the cat

cat has not been saying any thing to vex or teaze my Julia."

"No, indeed; but she was abusing the neighbourhood, I believe, and I don't like to hear people abused—that's all."

"*All*, my Julia! 'tis enough to make your actual existence perfectly miserable. If you don't resolve to be without eyes, ears, or understanding, whenever the conduct of your neighbours is concerned, those senses and that understanding will be in danger of being perpetually offended, by the tissue of malice and folly presented to them; and believe me, of all those minor plagues of life, the completest repertory is a country town."

CHAPTER VII.

> Abstract what others feel, what others think,
> All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink. POPE

REASSURED by her brother's observations, Julia hesitated whether she should communicate to him, in its fullest extent, the unwelcome information of Miss Ravenshawe.—"If Mr. Lascelles be indeed the unworthy character he is described," she reasoned, "my brother will discover it soon enough. If, on the contrary, the half of what I have heard should turn out to be the malicious exaggerations of a prude, I should scarcely forgive myself for depriving him of the society of the only rational being he has met with."

She was confirmed in this forbearance by the discovery of some circumstances that

that told rather in favour of L.
for instance, the violent resentme
Tom Birkit had its origin in a disp..ce
with the old squire, in which Lascelles
had clearly the right on his side.

Tom Birkit had paid him a visit, in his
professional capacity, on his father's account. Both father and son were in the
end completely foiled; and Tom, who had
more violent passions than one would have
suspected in a man so fond of acting the
Merry Andrew, could never afterwards
meet Mr. Lascelles without emotions of
rage, which he could not suppress.

Again, if several of the magnates of
Rothbury had contrived to quarrel with
their young rector, it was acknowledged,
on all hands, that the poor, at least, adored
him; and if the rich were not very desirous of his company, he could not be accused of troubling them with much of it.
Lascelles indulged in none of the usual
amusements of the country; he neither
hunted, nor was a sportsman, nor went to

 the

the assemblies; his books, his pencil, and his flute, were his chief relaxations. He was accused also of poetry; but if really guilty of the folly of writing verses, he never committed the still-greater folly of communicating them. These, with the solitary amusement of fishing, formed the circle of his moderate enjoyments. We may also add the pleasure he seemed to take in long and lonely excursions along the heathy hills and barren moors that surrounded his abode. Thither the wanderer would bend his steps, till he lost himself among the rude and sublime scenes of untamed nature; or at other times, as if his sole desire was to get far and farther from the haunts of men, he would pursue his meditations, walking with unconscious rapidity, till exhaustion reminded him of the necessity of repose, and the fever of his frame allayed the agitations of his heart.

From the contemplation of this interesting and singularly-situated being, Julia's

lia's attention was soon called away by concerns much nearer home. Though the Lodge had fallen so very short of his sanguine expectations, it was still Somerville's passion to make as advantageous an appearance as he could; his horses, his equipage, his establishment, all were on a scale that exceeded his present limited fortune.—" Better be envied than pitied," Horatio continued to repeat; and revelling in the prospect of a future golden harvest, he prepared to extend his connexions, and open fresh sources of expence. Julia saw the ruinous tendency of this; but her youth, her timidity, and, we may add, her modesty, prevented her from giving very strong or efficacious advice.

Deceived by the splendid appearance he made, the young ladies of Rothbury, who would, at all events, have thought Horatio a desirable conquest, believed him to be a glorious one; and of all the fair ones who laid siege to his heart, Eliza

Sanderson seemed the most likely to succeed.

Julia beheld her progress with the most serious and deepfelt alarm. Let it not therefore be supposed she was one of those selfish sisters who wish to keep a brother unmarried, that he may be more entirely their own: on the contrary, to have seen Horatio matched with a woman of merit would have given her the most heartfelt satisfaction; but Eliza Sanderson had *no* merit, and Julia foresaw for her brother, after this temporary fascination, a life of lasting anguish and regret.—"And is it come to this?" she said to herself, with tears. "After braving the severest storms of adversity, will Horatio patiently surrender himself up to ruin, with the tranquil port in view? Oh, my brother! is this the end of all my high hopes for you?—and you, wretched Julia! weep: you have a right to weep, for the last drop in the cup of misery is about to be poured in.

in. Wedded to a woman, destitute alike of refinement or feeling, Horatio will soon forget he is a brother; and we, who vowed, in the midst of surrounding misery, till death, to abide by each other, shall behold ourselves rudely divided, like two plants, which the hand of Art had, for mutual support, united, but which a tempest rooted up and dissevered."

Somerville was, however, not so much determined as Julia's affectionate anxiety led her to suppose, when an accidental circumstance threatened to accelerate the catastrophe.

One evening, at a party given by her mother, Eliza was, as usual, admiring herself before the chimney-glass, and adjusting her never-sufficiently-adjusted dress, when suddenly her muslin robe caught fire, and in an instant she was in a blaze. The females ran shrieking different ways. Horatio alone had the presence of mind to roll the rug around her, and, at the risk of hurting his own person very much, succeeded

ceeded in extinguishing the flames.—"Lord, child!" cried the old beauty, Miss Ravenshawe, as soon as she had recovered her recollection, "how could you be so heedless? you might have ruined your face!"

"She might have lost her life!" exclaimed Somerville, with a warmth of which he was himself scarcely conscious, and which, in fact, chiefly proceeded from indignation at that habitual reference to feelings of vanity which could break out on such an occasion. But his emotion was very differently interpreted by the company. The young ladies simpered, the old ones primmed up their mouths, and both agreed that "Mr. Somerville's eyes and voice expressed something *very particular*."

The next assembly, Somerville danced a great deal with Eliza Sanderson, and their approaching union began to be generally talked of. Things seemed to have a fearful tendency that way. Horatio, with

with a thousand good qualities, had the foible of fancying himself in love with every pretty girl he saw; and, independent of that, many a woman appears to advantage in a secluded scene who in more select society would be scarcely tolerated.

The next morning, as Somerville rode past Mrs. Sanderson's door, he experienced a wish to inquire after his fair partner. It was some time before he could make himself heard; and when at length, by repeated knocking, he had convinced those within that a visitor waited, still there did not appear any increased haste to let him in. Doors were slammed violently, a rush was heard along the passage, and at length a slipshod maid, with heavy eyes, from having "stopt up all night," presented herself, and inquired what his honour was pleased to want? Somerville answered, in two words—"The young ladies."

"This way, sir," said the maid, and shewed him into a little half-lighted back-parlour—alas! too much irradiated for the

advantage

advantage of the intended Mrs. Somerville! In a coloured gown and apron of the coarsest and most inelegant materials, her tresses all uncurled, eyes as red as ferrets, and cheeks as wan as wax, sat his Dulcinea, shelling peas. Opposite to her, robed in a flannel wrapper, with her hair in papers and her elbows on the table, lolled her beautiful sister Mary. A door, still left half-open, discovered an interminable vista of kitchen, back-kitchen, and scullery, where Mrs. Sanderson, who piqued herself upon being *a heavy hand*, was giving "superior Jane" a lesson in salting beef, while Eleanor was employed measuring out mugs of beer for the servants.

This was a busy day, and Mrs. Sanderson was too good a manager to let the pleasures of the evening interfere with the duties of the morning. It was no part of the ladies intentions, however, to have suffered a stranger to intrude upon their domestic arrangements, if it had not been

been for the indiscretion of Sally, who had either mistaken or wilfully disobeyed the orders given, in a flurried manner, by Eliza, on her first hearing Somerville's rap at the door.

She and Mary might very well have been in a proper morning-dress to receive visitors; but originally low-born and low-bred, the Sandersons, though on great occasions they displayed the show, could never be taught to relish the elegancies of wealth. When dressed and behaving like gentlewomen, it was always gala to them; and they experienced real relief and pleasure in being what the French term *en chenille.*

On the alarm given by the approach of a visitor, the two young ladies had been sitting in the above-mentioned trim in the front parlour; thence they had rushed for security into the other, intending that Mr. Somerville should be shewn into the room they had quitted, in order to finish their task, and adjust their dress.

The

The morning scene had totally undone the enchantment of the midnight hour. Somerville, however, apologized for what he obligingly termed his intolerable rudeness, and really did his utmost to put the poor girls at ease, who were not to blame for following useful occupations, but for the ridiculous affectation that led them, in public, to affect to despise such employments, and for the want of true refinement, which exposed them alternately to the reproach of ostentation and slovenliness.

But the lesson of the morning proved a most wholesome correction to Horatio; and Julia found herself at once relieved from her insupportable fear of being condemned to endure, as a sister-in-law, a being so totally uncongenial as Eliza.

Feeling in an uncommon flow of spirits from this circumstance, it was the first impulse of Julia's benevolent heart to communicate her pleasure by benefitting others. She bent her steps towards the house

house of a poor woman, who had, from her first arrival, been one of the objects of her bounty, and whose husband was just rising from a fever, which had long prevented him from working. Julia observed many comforts were added to their cottage since she had been there last. Nanny was loquacious in acknowledging the source of them.—"It was all the good rector," she said—"Heaven bless him! Oh, ma'am!" she continued, "you can't think how kind Mr. Lascelles he have been to us. Ever since my master have not been able to go to church, he have come every Sunday to our cot without the least bit of pride, to read him the Bible in his fine way, and to comfort him. Oh! ma'am, my lady, he's a beautiful man!"

This, in poor Nanny's simple language, was meant merely to designate the benevolence of his heart, and is a term often used by country-people to express their approbation of moral qualities.

Nanny was out of breath, and yet had not

not finished her eulogium, when the object of it entered the cottage. His colour deepened to even a finer than its usual glow, on thus unexpectedly meeting Miss Somerville; but both Lascelles and Julia were too well accustomed to acts of benevolence to feel that embarrassment, on being discovered performing them, which is rather the result of overrating than undervaluing their merit.

On leaving the cottage, Lascelles offered to accompany her part of the way; the conversation naturally turned on the scene they had quitted.—"These are the visits I make with the greatest pleasure," said Adolphus. "Following the bent of their natural feelings, those poor but honest people do not wait for the assent of a lord Lulworth, before they allow me any merit—for the fiat of a Miss Ravenshawe, before they open their humble doors to me."

Julia smiled.—"That lady," she said, "seems indeed to have conceived a strong prejudice against you."

For

"For *that* I might console myself," returned Lascelles, proudly; "but then she does more—she tries to prejudice all the worthy and amiable against me; for the whole family, on both sides, have combined to crush me, and you know not, Miss Somerville—may you never know!—the influence a powerful family has, in the country, towards giving the impulse to general opinion. My lord Lulworth desires nothing so earnestly as my ruin; he would gladly see my name and race exterminated."

Julia sighed and shuddered at this fearful picture of hatred.—"We must forgive our enemies, Mr. Lascelles," at length she said.

"I *do* forgive them!" returned Adolphus, with increasing animation. "Heaven is my witness how fervently, and from my inmost soul, not in the commonplace language of the world, but in the genuine and extensive sense of our inspired religion, I forgive them, as a Christian, all

all the persecutions I have endured. But," he added, in a tone suppressed, from deep and intense emotion, "that cannot prevent me from *feeling* my injuries as a man. Never," he resumed, after a pause—"never shall my lips accuse the woman who once thought she honoured me by a preference, unsought on my part; but should not her family—should they not, for their own sakes, take example by my forbearance? Their utmost malice has not been able to affix a stain on my moral character. Those virtues which others may owe to nature, and the happy calm of the passions, I have practised from principle; and what has been my reward? To be traduced, vilified, hunted down by detraction, like a wild beast, till misery of heart, and despair of obtaining justice from mankind, have almost tempted me to become the wretched thing they would have me. There have been moments in which I have despaired of virtue; and but for the sake of that dear child——"

His

His voice always faltered when he mentioned Celestina; and Julia observed, in the deep yet well-regulated sensibility that in every respect guided the conduct of Lascelles towards that child, the confutation of, at least, one of Miss Ravenshawe's accusations.

Lascelles continued.—" From the date of my acquaintance with your brother, Miss Somerville, and you, my heart began to open again to the hope of candour, humanity, and justice. My principles prevent me at present from saying all that I would wish; but may I hope never to be condemned by you without a hearing?"

" Assuredly not," replied Julia—" nothing could be more unjust."

" 'Tis enough," said Adolphus, and they each parted their several ways.

Julia proposed to call on Miss De Ross; and the interesting solitary turned his steps home to his " hermit house."

CHAPTER VIII.

Là gît la sombre Envie à l'œil timide et louche,
Versant sur des lauriers les poisons de sa bouche.
Le jour blesse ses yeux dans l'ombre étincelans:
Triste amante des morts, elle hait les vivans
VOLTAIRE'S *Henriade*.

. . . .

La Satire a cela de commun avec les Dieux, que la victime immolée à son autel lui plaît d'autant plus qu'elle est plus belle et plus parée. JOUY.

If the notice of Somerville was an object of competition among the fair ladies of Rothbury, Julia had soon reason to think her own influence was not inferior with its beaux. Since the look—the involuntary look, her discriminating eye had given at Bear Hall, Mr. Tom Birkit had known neither peace nor repose. An unwonted diffidence of his own powers of pleasing had

had laid hold of him, and he began to doubt whether he had given his talents a proper direction: that look must be explained, or he could know no rest.

The desired opportunity soon presented itself, for he now frequently visited at the Lodge, and sometimes when Horatio was out. A person so ingenuous as Julia was not long in confessing to him, that the cause of her astonishment was, to see a man, whom all the world admitted to have sense and talent, voluntarily and constantly descending to the elaborate trifling, which her eye had unconsciously reproved, when in the company of females.

" I plead guilty to the charge," replied Mr. Birkit, laughing; " but, perhaps, had I been as fortunate as Mr. Somerville in companions of the fair sex, my taste might have been better. Mine has been a strange lot, Miss Somerville; I have a mind to tell you an episode in a life that has been chequered with but few agreeable moments; but you must let me tell it my

own way, even at the risk of passing for a greater oddity than I have at first appeared to you. Know then that you are in company with a critic—with one who, if you were a Sappho as well as a Laura, could amply avenge, upon the productions of your pen, the cruelties of your eyes."

"Happily I am not in that predicament," returned Julia; "and though an enthusiastic admirer of poetry, can safely disclaim, on my own account, the slightest obligation to Apollo or the Muses."

"There I differ with you," Mr. Birkit replied; and from that fell into a reverie, of which, if Julia might judge from the glances of interest he, from time to time, directed towards her, she was the subject.

Desirous of putting an end to his musings, she reminded him of the promised *episode*, which Mr. Birkit seemed to have forgotten.

Apologizing for his absence of mind, he began in these words:—"I was naturally a passionate lover of literature, and, being born

born to a good estate, saw no reason, when I grew up, that I should be prevented the full indulgence of my genius. Judge then my astonishment and horror, when, on my removal from Harrow school, I was told by my father that I was destined by him to study an inferior branch of the law! I remonstrated, I wept, I prayed against this cruel, this needless piece of injustice; but you know, or rather, I believe, you do not yet know to what a height my father carries his ideas of parental authority.

"Many things conspired to disgust me with my home. Though I knew not what refined female society was *then*, still I had an idea what it *ought* to be, and was grieved and indignant to find my mother and sisters were not permitted to share that of the ladies of the neighbourhood. Home was an equally-unimproving scene to them and to me. The daily disputes I had with my father, on the subject of a profession, irritated his mind so much, that

 it

it prevented my having any influence with him to ameliorate their lot. Convinced of this, and to avoid a slavery I detested, I, one fine morning, turned my back on Bear Hall, and my face towards the great city.

"My feelings, on the first day's journey, were sufficiently melancholy and uncomfortable, but my spirits rose as I approached London.

"Though convinced that this open defiance of his authority would put the finishing stroke to my father's displeasure, and that, in such a state of mind, he was very capable of withdrawing the allowance that was my sole dependence, still, as long as the money lasted which I took with me, I permitted not an uneasy thought to assail me; and indeed youth, united to boundless liberty, is hardly capable of harbouring any of such a description. But as my purse sunk low, my spirit sunk with it. I wrote a letter to my father, intercessory, supplicatory, and deprecatory

precatory—supplicating for pardon and supplies, yet still deprecating the uncongenial mode of life to which he would condemn me. I protested that it was not the drudging at a desk I feared, but the *species* of drudgery; that, give me but an inspiring subject, I would cheerfully devote my hours to do it justice. He himself had seen, in my classic themes, if I had been idle; but this unmeaning tautology—this scribbling upon parchment, I would not, and could not consent to.

" My father sent me word, in answer, that since I depended so much upon the brilliancy of my genius, I had as favourable an opportunity as I could wish to try it; for, from that day, he cut off my allowance, and never wished to hear more of me till I had returned to a more dutiful frame of mind.'

" Fired at his refusal, I took him at his word, and commenced author; but I know not how it was, I might say, with more

truth than that inspired humourist, Goldsmith, used to do, that 'whenever I brought out any thing, the public made it a point to know nothing about it.' I then turned critic, and gave fair promise of being as poignant a one as disappointment, united to some little store of wit and learning, could make me.

'*On est convenu qu'un texte ne sera plus qu'un prétexte*,' says Peltier, speaking of modern criticism with more justice than is usually found in a pun; and in the first article I furnished, I rigidly adhered to that maxim.

"The piece under review was a serious and pathetic poem. An aged Arab schiek and his daughter were the two most prominent characters. They were ably drawn, and on them the interest of the poem might be said to depend; it was my business, therefore, to make them superlatively ridiculous. I began by turning the whole story inside out, as if it had been a

piece

piece of tapestry, and gave, in the burlesque manner of a travestie, a rapid and ludicrous sketch of the leading incidents.

"In my brief analysis, or rather misrepresentation, I took good care always to call the father 'the old gentleman,' and the daughter 'the young lady;' and, in short, acted to the author the part which the clown does to the dignified characters in Shakespeare's tragedies. This done, I sprinkled the whole with expressions, anecdotes, and allusions, irrelevant indeed, but irresistibly *piquant* to the idle reader; while, in order to prove to the serious that I was no trifler, I marshalled my little store of history, classical, and even black-letter learning, to complete the confusion of my author.

"I had gone on thus, to my own satisfaction, if not to his, a considerable way, when a doubt struck me, with which I wondered I had not been sooner perplexed. I had written nearly twenty pages, and,

 after

after the first, had completely lost sight of the work under consideration. The convenient maxim, '*un texte ne sera plus qu'un prétexte*,' was not quite sufficient to justify this; I therefore hastily wound up the article, with a few compliments to my own candour and indulgence, and a friendly counsel to the author to write no more.

"When I carried it to my employer, he smiled—said I had a pretty notion of writing, but expressed his fears that I was not sufficiently poignant to suit the modern taste.

"Released thus from some few scruples, which, notwithstanding my self-confidence, had sometimes whispered at the bottom of my heart, I determined, in my next essay, to shew him what I could do. As a consideration that should temper the severity of criticism, some French author has observed, that, after all, to have made an unsuccessful attempt to amuse our fellow-

low-citizens is not a crime worthy of capital punishment; but no such lenient maxims had place in our tribunal.

"To lure in young readers, I introduced my strictures with a startling pleasantry, but one which had as little to do with the subject under review, as with the works of Confucius; but soon weary of launching the light silver shafts of wit, I begged my reader's pardon, for having taught him to consider in a ludicrous point of view what deserved the most serious reprehension, and forthwith took up the tomahawk. Then began the war-song in good earnest. Though I knew the author to be a man of morals and character, I treated him as a ruffian, a blasphemer, a villain, and incendiary. I took care to word my accusations either in marking italics or staring capitals; then, descending from my raving fit, I condescended to resume the tone of irony—treated him as a sick or mad patient, or at least as one in a delirium, and

recommended a course of wholesome criticism for his cure.

"Another time I had to maintain a paradox——But I fear I tire you."

"No—you do not," said Julia. "Let us hear what your paradox was."

"I asserted, that the most transcendent genius would become the creator of a very bad school; that men with hard hearts and barren imaginations, no more like their great archetype than I to Hercules, would think they had nothing to do but seize on some point of English history or musty old chronicle, toss it up into a romance, combining all the dryness of truth with all the inutility of fiction, and fill up the details with fighting, law Latin, profaneness, and the coarse provincial dialects of the lower sort, whose jargon is, was, and ever will be, pretty much the same. I remember I chose, as the motto to one of my flourishes on this subject, the following lines from doctor Johnson:—

'Wheresoe'er

'Wheresoe'er I turn my view,
All is strange, yet nothing new;
Endless labour all along,
Endless labour to be wrong;
Phrase that Time hath flung away,
Uncouth words in disarray,
Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
Ode, and elegy, and sonnet.'

"I had just concluded the last line (not at all applicable, by the way, to a prose or prosaic romance, which you will) when my landlady entered the room, and seeing it strewed with new-looking books, cut and uncut, exclaimed—'Dear heart! how glad the poor lady above stairs would be of some of them fine stories! Though she couldn't make books out of the books,' so my worthy landlady termed my reviews, 'she could read 'em fast enough, I'll warrant her.'

"I easily comprehended what this hint was meant to lead to; I knew that there were a lady and gentleman, my fellow-lodgers, and that the lady had been for some time in a delicate state of health. I

 now

now made some civil inquiries about her, which rendered my landlady very communicative.—'Why, aye, sir, Mrs. Drinkwater, she is getting a little better than she have been, but still very weakly, poor soul! and confined to her room: and I don't believe, for my own part, they be over and above rich, or I'm sure sich a fine scholard as she would subscribe to a library, for she have read every book in the house, except Kearsley's Peerage and Taplin's Farriery, and is always crying out—"Oh, Mrs. Hodges! couldn't you get me something more entertaining?"

"I really felt some interest from this account of my pretty neighbour, with whom I had had a slight intercourse of civility before her illness, and could not forbear making the offer, which, I believe, Mrs. Hodges expected. I said Mrs. Drinkwater was welcome to read any book it was in my power to lend her.

"Satisfied with her success, Mrs. Hodges departed, with her lap full of novels.

"She

"She returned in a few days for a fresh supply; and so grateful was the lady's husband to me for my readiness to oblige, that, as soon as my fair neighbour was well enough to sit up and see company, he invited me to tea in their apartments.

"Lieutenant Drinkwater was a good-natured, thoughtless, harmless character; I have reason to think he was at that time under a cloud, on account of some pecuniary embarrassments, his way of living was so economical, and he kept so entirely at home. He had married his lady, in consequence of a debt to a considerable amount, contracted to a shoemaker in his last quarters.

"Now, when I say boot and shoe maker, do not figure to yourself a coarse mechanic, but rather a flourishing and reputable tradesman; and as the lieutenant's father was himself in business, his paying his debts to the father, by an offer of marriage to the daughter, was no great degradation.

"Mrs. Drinkwater would not have been reckoned

reckoned genteel in genteel circles, but she was very well, deeply read in novels, and had beauty, which greatly contributes to a woman's presentability. I complimented her on her amended looks; she thanked me, in return, for my complaisance, in indulging her in the species of reading in which she so much delighted, and added—'How much I envy you, Mr. Birkit, for getting all the charming new things as they come out!'

"I assured her, laughing, that I did not think myself so much an object of envy; and that as for the novelties, she was welcome to read as many as she liked, if, in return, she would undertake to save the labour of my brains, by giving me her opinion of them.

"Mrs. Drinkwater, like all truly-pretty women, was more flattered by a compliment to her understanding than to her beauty; and, satisfied with her own powers of criticism, the very next day sent me back a novel, with her opinion in

in pencil, which I, being in haste, transcribed as mine.

"From that moment there might be said to be a kind of literary partnership between the shoemaker's daughter and myself—a partnership in which I obliged her considerably, while I was spared the disgustful labour of wading through more than half the dullness to which I had formerly been chained. I gave the opinions of Mrs. Drinkwater sometimes as those of 'a lively female;' sometimes I transformed her into 'a reverend old gentlewoman, in a quilled cap and spectacles;' but more frequently I repeated them as emanating immediately from my own awful person.

"On those occasions I could not forbear imagining the trepidation of my author or authoress, as they tremblingly peeped at the decrees of my admirable Crispiana, believing them to be the oracles of a god; and our joint criticisms irresistibly brought

to

to my recollection a story I heard from lady Penmawr (for the accuracy of which I will not vouch) respecting certain Laureate Odes, produced on solemn occasions in a sister country, which odes, though they went by the name of the court poet, were well known to be written by an old woman at Drogheda.

"Sometimes, for variety, I tried my hand at panegyric, and was, one day, looking for an article of that kind, which I had inserted in a fashionable morning paper, when my attention was arrested by the following paragraph:—

'If the young gentleman who left B****, it is conjectured in a desponding state of mind, about the middle of March, will return to his afflicted family, or inform them by a line where he is to be found, he may depend upon the kindest treatment, and that the past shall never be mentioned to him.

'N. B.—If fear of a certain subject is the

the cause of his reluctance to return home, the writer assures him that he shall be no further importuned about it.'

"This advertisement made me cut a caper as high again as myself. To whom could it relate but to me? I was young —I was a gentleman; in a desponding state of mind enough, God knows, when I first turned my back on Bear Hall, for which B**** might stand; and the subject on which I was no farther to be importuned was, no doubt, the learning to be an attorney.

"Since the deficiency in my finances had obliged me to exchange my genteel lodgings for shabby ones, my family had lost all traces of me. This was, doubtless, the last resource of my tender mother, or perhaps grandmother, to obtain some tidings of their truant. Home, and all its joys, rose before me; for, to say the truth, I was heartily tired of shifting for myself. My tender mother, my reverend grandame, my favourite sister Jessy, even my father,

father, with his gaiters and *carnassière*, appeared to advantage through the flattering mists of absence; and I wrote that very evening to my mother, that if the paragraph in the Morning Post came from the quarter I suspected, it had reached its aim, and was welcomed with tears by a grateful heart panting to embrace again the objects of its affection.

"Her answer cleared up all.

"I was so overjoyed that I forgot to make any terms for myself, or rather thought the concluding assurance in the advertisement all-sufficient.

"The following day saw me bowling merrily along the great northern road; and I was soon welcomed, by my honoured parent, to the hall of my fathers, with a hollow that you might have heard from this to Cheviot.

"A week's residence at home convinced me of the vanity of all expectations of perfect human happiness. Jessy, my favourite sister, welcomed me indeed with a

languid

languid smile; but it was that sort of smile which proclaims the peace of the heart is gone. I soon found she was suffering under the only serious calamity that can assail young females placed in a state of respectability, ease, and affluence. A match that I had thought concluded between her and a neighbouring gentleman, had been broken off by the authority of my father; and the poor girl, in yielding the obedience due from a daughter, had made a sacrifice of her peace of mind.

"As the young gentleman's character was unexceptionable, and he was moreover my particular friend, I ventured to remonstrate with my father on the harshness of this proceeding.

"He swore a dozen oaths—said that a man of twice as good an estate had offered for Jessy, and that he would have at least *one* person in his family obedient to his wishes.

"I saw this alluded to my steady determination

termination against the mode of study he wished me to pursue.—'If, sir,' I said, in a faltering voice, 'you could point out to me the utility of studying a dry and disagreeable branch of the law, that——'

"My father interrupted me with his usual vociferation—'Utility, Tom! Why, is there not thy uncle James, who has lost half his estate, by not knowing how to defend it against the tricks of an attorney? And it is only last month I was cast in a suit about tithes, with that grousing, farming parson Sams, of Hay Hill, when, if I had known as much of law as thou mayest, Tom, I should have been able to right myself. Why, Tom, thou art not fit to take care of thy own property—thou art not fit for a justice of peace, or for any thing in the versal world, without knowing somewhat of law.'

"I found that the ideas of a good lawyer, as he thought proper to style it, and a country gentleman, were so irrevocably united in my father's brain, that it would be

be utterly impossible to separate them. Where he had picked up these notions was another matter. Though possessed of a naturally-strong understanding, it had been counteracted by a very confined education; and, in consequence, all his opinions were the result of impressions taken up by chance. He was intended for a sensible man, but circumstances had made him only a humourist.

"I had a severe struggle with myself; at length fraternal affection prevailed. I had always loved Jessy in an uncommon degree; to see her looking like a ghost was more than I had fortitude to stand. I saw my father was determined on having one victim to his will, and resolved that victim should be me.—'Well, sir,' I exclaimed, 'I yield to your arguments. You say you are determined *one* of your children shall comply with your humour —let it be me. Consent to ratify my sister's engagement with Mr. Eyrecourt, and I promise you, however dry and disagreeable

able it is to me, instantly to commence the study of the law.'

"My father gave me a hug, which made me really doubt whether the noble animal that gives its name to our ancient residence might not rank among our remote progenitors. Jessy married Mr. Eyrecourt, and recovered her complexion and smiles; and behold Mr. Tom Birkit, a rather singular example, a student of law, from brotherly affection."

There was something in the history of Julia's own feelings that led her to sympathize with singular readiness in the fate of a man who owned *such* to be his motives of conduct. She gave him a look of such flattering approbation, as completely did away the disagreeable impression of the one he had received at the Hall. He remembered it, however, still, and continued, in a more sprightly tone—"But there is yet a question which I am sure the elegant and highly-cultivated Miss Somerville wishes to ask—an objection that she

she longs to start—' How comes it, Mr. Tom Birkit, that you who, during your short practice as a critic, must have acquired some little knowledge of life and literature—how comes it, I say, that you should voluntarily consent to lower yourself to that egregious trifling, which made me doubt whether or not you were possessed of common sense?'

" I can only answer, that evil communication corrupts good manners. When first I announced my intention of remaining in the neighbourhood of Rothbury, I found my society very much courted by the fair; but, ye gods! what companionship did I find among them for my mind! If I spoke to them on topics of literature, science, or general information, they did not understand me; I confined myself to light reading; but they were equal strangers to any thing like delicate *tact*, or the elegant refinement of female taste. Mention to them a novel of the first water, in French or English, *Corinne, ou L'Italie, par*

par exemple, or one of the works of the modern Shakespeare of the North. Insensible to the glow of style, the beauties of detail, the rapid yet profound views of manners those animated pictures suggest, these indefatigable gossips were only intent upon the *story*, which they discussed as if it was that of their next-door neighbour; and after they had decided it was not right of lord Nelvil to marry Lucilia, and they were glad Frank Osbaldistone married Diana Vernon, they had said all that the finest sports of human genius suggested to their unfurnished minds, and bald, poverty-struck imaginations; but there was one subject which they never found above their comprehension—praise of their own dear selves; and when this was mingled with a little raillery, the more *outré* and whimsically silly the better, a man was pronounced a dear creature, and became the oracle of the card and tea tables.

"What a pity," resumed Mr. Birkit, after

after a longer pause than he had yet indulged, that I should have experienced the silly ambition of shining in the eyes of such judges, before I became acquainted with what a really-elegant female character was! but it is too late to mend."

Julia was anxious to make him all the atonement in her power, for having too hastily prejudged his character; she was, at the same time, too well acquainted with the language of admiration not to know that the young gentleman meant, in his address, a particular application to herself. Totally averse to encouraging such thoughts, she was very guarded in her reply, but at the same time drew this inference from the conversation of the morning, that a mind cultivated by education, to a degree of over-refinement, may, at a first view, take a disgust to a character which is found, upon a second examination, to be possessed of many valuable qualities.

CHAPTER IX.

Miranda, mark, where, shrinking from the gale,
Its silken leaves yet moist with early dew,
That faint, fair flower, the lily of the vale,
Droops its meek head, and looks, methinks, like you!
Wrapt in a shadowy veil of tender green,
Its snowy bells a soft perfume dispense;
And bending, as reluctant to be seen,
In simple loveliness it soothes the sense.
With such unconscious beauty, pensive, mild,
Miranda charms—Nature's soft, modest child!

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

JULIA was reflecting on the conversation related in the preceding chapter, and particularly on that part of it in which she disclaimed the character of a poet, when a packet was delivered to her by the general post, containing the following lines:—

TO JULIA.

"With feign'd humility, whilst you
Disclaim the sweet, poetic art,
This declaration I avow,
For once you act a double part

Julia, adorn'd with purest mind,
That scorns to hide its inmost thought,
This Julia we shall surely find
With deep dissimulation fraught

For well she knows her eyes alone
Inspire the soul-subduing lay;
Her beauties cause the poet's dawn
To blaze in a refulgent day.

Wilt thou, presumptuous, then declare
Apollo's self no poet too?
For *inspiration's* all *his* care;
He scorns to scribble as do you.

The Muses too (for aught I know)
Have never penn'd a single line;
Yet where's the mortal wont allow
Their title to this art divine?

To write your thoughts you are too proud;
But here I know the reason lies:
You are own cousin to the god;
I see the likeness in your eyes."

" Very tolerable *badinage!*" said Horatio, who had sauntered over to Julia's work-table, and looked over her as she was reading those lines—" very tolerable indeed for Mr. Tom Birkit!"

" How can you imagine they are his?" inquired Julia. " The lines arrived by London."

" It is very possible, my little Julia, to send a paper of verses from the country to London, that they may arrive in the country unsuspected again; and I wonder it has not occurred to your sagacity, that an anonymous critic may also be the anonymous celebrator of your charms. But, seriously, I have more solid reasons for asserting Mr. Birkit admires you. He is heir to a clear estate of three thousand a-year. You have at length discovered him to have goodness and sense—a discovery I made in the very first conversation I had with him, and your influence will speedily cure him of the ridiculous ambition

tion of shining before people quite unworthy of him."

"And think you those reasons of sufficient force, Horatio, to make me give up the pleasures of my singularly-happy home for a person I do not love?"

"I think them at least sufficient to make you pause, and consider well before you reject his suit."

Mr. Birkit soon declared himself both the author of the lines, and a pretender to Julia's hand.

As her brother had recommended, Julia did deliberate before she rejected him; but her final determination continued the same, though she contrived to give her refusal such an air of gratitude and politeness, that the friendship Mr. Birkit retained for Somerville and his sister rendered their intercourse nearly the same as before he had proposed for her.

This refusal, and the motives Julia avowed for it, touched Horatio deeply. He had thought it his duty to set before

her the advantages of such a marriage, though he secretly acknowledged the society at Bear Hall to be the most unsuited to her manners and taste. He had performed this painful duty, and the result was a conviction of the strong attachment and gratitude with which he had inspired her.

The brother and sister had now each had it in their power to marry, and each had sacrificed the uncertain advantages of a new connexion to the pure and permanent pleasures of domestic felicity. Still there was a higher happiness of which Julia could form the idea; and in the innocent and affectionate enthusiasm of her young heart, she wished for her brother a wife who should unite every valuable and amiable quality, and who should be, to her, that female friend, of which, notwithstanding the tender attentions of Horatio, her heart sometimes felt the want.

None approached so nearly to the idea Julia had formed to herself of that character,

ter, as the gentle and interesting Amelia De Ross. On her part, the heart of the timid, dejected girl seemed to expand in this scene of domestic affection; and she expressed her feelings with a graceful energy, of which those who only saw her in the cold and heartless intercourse of society would have scarcely believed her capable.—"I should not be surprised, Miss Somerville," she would say, "if you never married. Where can you hope to find a man so devoted, so attentive, so constantly affectionate, as your brother? I cannot express to you what passes in my mind, in contemplating your sweet—your holy union! It presents to me the picture of the most endearing affection of which the human mind is capable—an affection which has every thing that constitutes delight, unmingled with a single painful feeling—that is love, and yet is *not* love."

Amelia blushed at the animated warmth of expression into which she had been be-

trayed, and Julia could not help secretly observing, that the extremely-severe system of Miss Ravenshawe had produced in her niece the tendency she most guarded against and dreaded—a disposition to enthusiasm and romance, however veiled by a shrinking delicacy of manners. To this was united the most pensive and interesting style of beauty.

Amelia De Ross was pale, but an additional tint of colour would have warred with the general expression conveyed by her features and countenance. It was impossible to look upon her without involuntarily recalling to mind every thing that is soft and fragrant, faint and fair.

To cheer this drooping lily became Julia's most pleasing employment. Knowing how unhappy she was at home, Miss Somerville held out every temptation to draw Amelia to the Lodge. They made appointments to ride, to walk, to read, and practise music together. The conformity in their opinions and taste, and the confidence

confidence between them, became unbounded. There was but one subject from the discussion of which the delicate Amelia ever shrunk—that was the separation between Lascelles and her sister; and Julia, as by a tacit agreement, imitated her silence. On the contrary, the happiness of family union, such as existed between Somerville and Julia, was an inexhaustible topic with Miss De Ross.

One day, in reply to some good-humoured expressions of Amelia's envy, Julia said—"It is time, I think, my dear Amelia, that, like the princesses of romance, we should each give to the other a sketch of our little lives. I will set the example; and you shall see," she added, with a deep convulsive sigh, "whether I have not dearly purchased the privilege of possessing a *pattern* brother."

"Oh, do!" answered Amelia. "You cannot imagine how much my curiosity has been excited on your account, though

 I trust

I trust I have forborne the slightest indication of it."

Julia pressed her hand, in acknowledgment of this additional proof of propriety of feeling, and began her little history.

"My father was the head of a mercantile house in London, of which the concerns were so extensive, that he might literally be said not to know the limits of his own wealth. My mother's parties at the west end of the town vied with the most distinguished of the wives of the nobility.

"I was the youngest of the whole family. My sisters were universally admired—I have been reckoned rather pretty," continued Julia, with a modest blush, "but you would in vain endeavour, from seeing me, to form an idea of the regular and resplendent beauty of my sisters. They were their father's and their mother's pride; but, at the very height of their bloom and brilliancy, the eldest was attacked

attacked with a lingering and dangerous malady, which at length brought her to the grave. The second was seized in the same manner—she also died.

"Wild with grief, my mother removed into the country, in hopes of preserving the third. In vain. Just at the same period, and in the same manner, she drooped, like her sisters, and all the art of medicine could not preserve her from the same fate. I never saw my mother smile again. Nursed in prosperity, she had scarcely known affliction before. It turned her brain. She only passed from the violence of frenzy to the torpor of despair. Never shall I forget the fixed, yet harrowing look with which she one day gazed on a statue of Niobe, that adorned our gallery.—'I was, like thee,' she said, 'too proud of the beauty and promise of my darlings. But happier—oh, far happier, I can die!'

"Her words were prophetic; she was soon afterwards confined by illness to her

 bed,

bed, from which she never rose. Of all his family, my father had only Horatio and me left. I was possessed of a better constitution than my sisters, which I attributed to my not having been a favourite with my mother, who did not nurse me herself, and who suffered me to pass the first years of my life in the country.

"With spirits irrevocably depressed by the sad events that had taken place so rapidly in my family, I was, against my will, put at the head of a magnificent establishment, and, as the presumed inheritor of great wealth, found myself followed, caressed, and flattered; yet even at that period danger menaced us in a different form.

"My father had a junior partner, an Irishman of an ancient and honourable family. Mr. De Burgh was one of the most agreeable men I ever saw, and, in all his habits and pursuits, much more the man of fashion than the man of business. Frank, animated, and engaging, his manners, which

which displayed the wit and amenity peculiar to his country, formed the most advantageous contrast with my poor father's —ever cold, severe, and calculating: but of his principles we were not quite so certain. The head-clerk was the first to take the alarm, and ventured to hint to my father the necessity of being on his guard with respect to Mr. De Burgh.

"My father only laughed at his panic, and attributed the strange rumours that were afloat to the jealousy his splendour might have excited.—'Better be envied than pitied,' he said.

"Oh, Amelia! do you wonder that I shudder to hear Horatio repeat that dangerous maxim?

"The warning was but too true. I still sincerely incline to believe that Mr. De Burgh's intentions were honourable; but, misled by the madness of speculation, he had entered into engagements it was impossible for him to fulfil. The credit

of

of the house was compromised—its commercial honour was gone!

"Ignorant as a child of these events, I had been out all the morning, procuring artificial flowers for a fete that was to be given in a few days at our house. I was desirous of my father's opinion respecting their effect in one of the rooms, and repaired, with my usual freedom, to his library. I knocked, but received no answer. I was always welcome, and therefore fearlessly prepared to open the door. It was locked. I listened—a nameless terror came over me. Suddenly I heard the report of a pistol, and some one fell. Terrified, I hurried to my brother.

"Somerville was just returned home from riding. He used force to have the door opened. Can I repeat the scene that followed? Our father lay extended on the floor without life or motion; a pistol, just discharged, had dropped from one hand, while the letter that informed him

of

of De Burgh's deficiencies was still fast clenched in the other."

Julia paused, overcome by agony; and the trembling, terrified Amelia entreated her not to proceed.

"I will say no more to-day," she replied, at length recovering herself, "except to describe the conduct of my brother on that awful occasion. When medical aid had been tried in vain, we were convinced, beyond the possibility of doubt, of our irreparable loss; the anxiety to preserve my health and reason roused this dear brother to new exertions, while all around us breathed ruin and despair. Kneeling down by the bloody and breathless corse of our mutual parent, he vowed, while he clasped his protecting arm around me, from that moment to supply to me the loss of a father's care.—'And, oh!' he added, with a solemnity which the horrors of the time and place rendered doubly affecting and impressive, 'may the good

forsake

forsake me in this world, and Heaven abandon me in the next, on the day that I forget thee, Julia!"

CHAPTER X.

The rose, when first it doth prepare
  Its ruddy leaves to spread,
And kissed by the cold night-air,
  Hangs down its cowering head,
Is not so fair as Love that speaks,
In unbid blush, from Beauty's cheeks.

The little bird that clear doth sing
  In shelter of green trees,
When flow'rets sweet begin to spring
  In dew-besprinkled meads,
Is not so pleasant to mine ear
As Love that scantly speaks for fear.

The Shepherd in Love.

THE next day Julia, without further entreaty, concluded her history.—"A woman's story is nothing without love, and I am

I am come to that part of my narrative where it will have a place. Yet perhaps what I shall relate may more properly be said to belong to indifference or hatred than to that flattering passion.

"From the period of my entrance to my exit from the fashionable world, which embraces about two years, how many lessons was I doomed to receive! At the height of our prosperity, my father, without consulting my inclinations, engaged me to a young nobleman of unexceptionable manners, but to whom I was as indifferent, I believe, as he was to me. Upon the ruin that succeeded, lord St. Adelm behaved as if he considered the contract void; nor do I blame him; we had no time to know or love one another, all our intercourse having been confined to a few formal visits on his part: but the manner in which this treaty was broken off was most offensive to my feelings. Two young ladies, who, of all my female intimates, had been my bosom-friends, took this occasion, when

when I was unable to appear in the world and defend myself, to insinuate that lord St. Adelm had withdrawn his claim, not so much on account of the deficiency in my fortune, as of the defects in my temper and character, which he had discovered upon a nearer view.

"One of these ladies has since become lady St. Adelm. God forgive her, as I do, for the evil she would have done me, whatever may have been her motives! but you may judge, Amelia, after so many trials, if it is surprising that, though young, I should judge the world as stripped of its flattering illusions—that I should decide upon my own actions, and those of others, from a strict scrutiny into their motives, and look to myself for my resources, rather than seek them in general society. One striking advantage I have derived from the injustice I experienced; it has rendered me slow to admit the insinuations of calumny, wary in my judgments, and

and compassionate towards those who appear to be its victims."

As she uttered these words, Amelia looked as if she did not exactly understand to what her friend alluded.

Julia blushed and paused, conscious that, in this concluding sentence, she had not been *speaking to the question.*—" I have little more to add," she resumed. " At first my poor Horatio was, of course, involved in an ocean of business; but when this was settled, and the wreck of our property collected, we found we still had enough left to enable us to live in ease, though not in affluence. This property Horatio insisted upon dividing equally with me; and thus, though deprived of the wealth that I once was taught to believe my inheritance, this dear brother has secured to me enough for independence.

" His next care was to find me some retreat, as far removed as possible from the scenes where I had suffered so much; and as he had sworn never to separate his destiny

destiny from mine, thither he resolved to accompany me. My father's town and country house, with all the accessories of his unbounded opulence, were sold. What we intended to retire to was some pleasant cottage villa, not on so mean a scale as to exclude the idea of elegance. How he was misled in the tempting description of the Lodge," continued Julia, smiling, "my brother, in his own humourous manner, best can tell you; but I shall never complain of the deficiencies of that abode where I first became acquainted with my amiable Amelia."

Miss De Ross sighed deeply.—"Your sufferings have been unusually great, my sweet friend," she replied; "yet surely much is compensated in possessing such a brother as Mr. Somerville."

"True," answered Julia; "yet still this paragon is not without his faults, though 'ev'n his failings lean to virtue's side.' I could mention the greatest of them in the words of an apologue, composed by a foreign

reign princess*, upon the character of her son.—'All the fairies,' said she, 'vied with each other, upon the birth of this young prince, to distinguish him by their gifts. They endowed him with beauty, wit, valour, and understanding. I will undo the effect of all these precious possessions,' said a maleficent fairy, 'by the addition of a single quality—good-nature!' And," continued Julia, "though it may seem a paradox to assert it, if ever Horatio should fail in any of his duties, I am sure it will be by the excess of that virtue. Still the steadiness of his character has other enemies more dangerous—vanity and pride. Somerville has more false pride than any man in England."

Julia paused; in the earnestness of her concern, that the being she loved above all others should not be more perfect, she had imprudently revealed his faults to a comparative stranger. Immediately conscious

* The princess palatine, mother of the regent, Philip duke of Orleans.

scious of her error—"How unamiable I have been," she thought, "thus to expose the few failings of my too-kind brother!" But surprise was added to her other emotions, when she observed the effect her observation had on Miss De Ross.

Amelia listened, with downcast eyes, while a burning blush suffused her cheek, and when at length those mild eyes were raised, Julia observed them to be swimming in tears. A new idea darted into her mind, which she knew not whether to repulse, or welcome with pleasure. She tenderly pressed Amelia's hand; and to avoid letting her see she suspected her secret, affected an air of gaiety, and resumed —"Now I have fulfilled my promise it is your turn to recount your adventures."

"The events of my life have been too simple and uniform," Amelia replied, "to be worthy of exciting curiosity;" and here the subject ended.

During the period of his shortlived infatuation, Julia, in hopes of bringing back her

her brother to a purer taste, had often contrasted the vulgar coquetry of Eliza Sanderson with the dignified elegance of Miss De Ross.

"She wants animation," was Horatio's laconic reply; but since that period, something or other had convinced him Amelia was not so deficient in animation as he at first supposed, and he began to contemplate her character with more complacency.

The interest excited in the brother and sister by the gentle, unassuming manners of Miss De Ross, did not diminish the regard with which they beheld the unfortunate Lascelles, for whom the warm-hearted Horatio had conceived a very lively and sincere friendship.

Accustomed to trace every impulse and action to its source, Julia, upon reflection, doubted whether she had been right in not immediately communicating to her brother the information of Miss Ravenshawe. She had accordingly acquainted Horatio with every particular, and he agreed

agreed with her to stay till they had less-suspected evidence, before they discarded from their esteem a person who seemed at first every way worthy of it.—"When family-quarrels are spoken of in the world," he observed, "the usual mode of judging is to say that there are faults on both sides. This apparently-lenient decision may be, in many cases, a mere common-place, uttered to avoid the trouble of entering more deeply into the question; but in *this* one, we may fairly conclude, from his general character, it is the *least* that can be urged in favour of Lascelles, and I should sincerely regret to deprive him of the consolation he seems to derive from our sympathy and society."

Lascelles was, in consequence, a pretty frequent visitor at the Lodge; and as he and Miss De Ross were both perfectly well-bred people, they seemed, by a kind of intuition, to discover the days and hours in which they would be sure to avoid meeting each other. His little girl, Celestina,

Celestina, began to be an object of real interest to Julia; and she already took a lively pleasure in giving her lessons in reading and singing. Celestina's recollection of the person and endearments of her lost "mamma" every day grew fainter, while her affection was transferred to Miss Somerville. Indeed her remembrance of her parent soon became so slight, that Julia concluded the separation must have taken place some time.

The intercourse between Horatio and Amelia assumed every day a character more tender; and Julia, who feared her aunt had other views for her, besought her brother to reflect, before he endangered the peace of an amiable girl, who seemed already endued with too much sensibility for the world she was destined to encounter.—"You know, dear Horatio," she said, "Miss Ravenshawe will not consider your fortune sufficiently large to entitle you to propose for her niece."

 Horatio

Horatio laughed.—"Pooh! *let* the old cat consider—I am not bound to shew my rent-roll to her. I don't doubt but she thinks me much richer than I really am. Better be envied than pitied."

Julia's alarms were, in fact, partly ill-founded. Lord Lulworth, who was the principal person to be consulted in the business, did not evince the repugnance that might have been expected to the idea of his daughter's marriage. He had a large family of girls to establish, and scarcely any fortune to give them. Horatio, besides his profession, had very good expectations from an uncle far advanced in life; and when his lordship also took into consideration his personal good qualities, and the partiality of Amelia, he very readily signified his assent.

To this must be added, that Horatio, by his manners and habits, had the art, without any more sinister intention than that of indulging the vanity of the moment.

ment, of making every one believe him a man of fortune; and we cannot wonder that the match was very speedily arranged.

END OF VOL. III.

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TALES OF A TOURIST.

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TALES OF A TOURIST.

CONTAINING

THE OUTLAW,

AND

FASHIONABLE CONNEXIONS.

In Four Volumes.

BY MISS LEFANU,

AUTHOR OF

STRATHALLAN, LEOLIN ABBEY, HELEN MONTEAGLE, &c.

From region old, that hoary Time supplies,
To modern manners, changing as they rise,
The Wand'rer darts his keen, enquiring glance;
And, as the comic or the grave prevails,
With living portraits decks his sportive Tales,
Or gorgeous colouring of wild Romance. *Creation's Heir.*

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1823.

TALES OF A TOURIST.

CONTINUATION OF

FASHIONABLE CONNEXIONS.

CHAPTER I.

> Not Happiness itself makes good her name;
> Our very wishes give us not our wish.
> How distant oft the thing we doat on most
> From that for which we doat, felicity! YOUNG.

MR. Somerville and his sister had been visited by lord Lulworth and the honourable Misses de Ross, and every thing was in train for the celebration of the approaching marriage. Had Julia possessed a turn for castle-building, nothing she could have planned would have been more agreeable to her feelings—to unite toge-

ther the two persons now dearest to her, and thus to possess her brother's affection and Amelia's friendship, strengthened by the ties that drew them towards each other! She ventured to hope a renewal of some of the most pleasing days of youth, before calamity had swept away, with such an unsparing hand, so many objects of her dearest affection. If any. thing damped her satisfaction, it was the prospect of a closer connexion with Miss Ravenshawe; and this lady, in the visit she paid on the occasion, more than justified Julia's apprehensions. It was at an hour when Mr. Somerville was absent from the Lodge that Miss Ravenshawe called, unaccompanied even by her usual attendant. She looked more stately and grim than usual, and Julia felt an undefined apprehension of impending evil.—"I wish this interview, and the subject of it, to remain a secret between us, Miss Somerville," she began; "therefore I consider myself fortunate in finding you alone."

Julia

Julia bowed, but had never felt less delighted at the idea of solitude.

The formidable lady resumed—"When, after bestowing for many years on an adored child the care and solicitude of a parent, a relative is induced, however reluctantly, to resign her to the protection of a stranger, anxiety for her welfare long survives the transfer; and such I feel at this moment for my angel niece Amelia."

"Bravo!" thought Julia, "the object is changed, but the style remains the same."

Miss Ravenshawe continued—"When between persons in a certain sphere, things have gone to a certain length, they cannot be broken off without exciting much disagreeable discussion."

Having waited in vain for a distinct assent to this oracular proposition, the "superior" lady added—"But it is never too late, Miss Somerville—it is never too late, I say, to prevent the conclusion of a

 treaty

treaty productive of unpleasant consequences to all parties."

"What upon earth does she wish to propose?" thought Julia.

"I am an enemy to circumlocution," observed Miss Ravenshawe; "every thing between relations, or relations that are to be, should be fair and above-board. I have lived a little longer in the world than you, Miss Somerville, and have always remarked, that a great deal of mischief is done by half-expressed wishes and injudicious concealments. To be brief, then, unless you consent to give up that very faulty character, Mr. Lascelles——"

Julia interrupted her with a cheek suddenly glowing like crimson—"I—Mr. Lascelles—*give up!*" she repeated, in a disorder and confusion of mind that scarcely allowed her to know the expressions she made use of. "Surely I misunderstand you, Miss Ravenshawe: you cannot intend to insult me!"

"I am

"I am above temporizing, Miss Somerville; you or your brother are just the same thing—your influence over him is well known. Once more, unless you both consent entirely to give up your intercourse with that very exceptionable character, I will never yield my consent to the match."

"I am but too well aware," replied Julia, recovering from her first surprise, "that the connexion my brother is forming must have a sensible influence on his future intercourse with Mr. Lascelles; but can it be expected of us to hurt his feelings by any sudden and marked change on our part?"

"Take your choice, madam," screamed Miss Ravenshawe; for she had, by this time, worked herself into one of her agreeable fits of rage; "take your choice—Mr. Lascelles or me; for on this I am determined, either he or I shall never enter this house as a visitor again!"

With this denunciation, and full of

wrath, she departed. Shortly afterwards, though not in a manner she had foreseen, Miss Ravenshawe saw her utmost wish accomplished, in the banishment of the much-dreaded Lascelles. In the meantime, Julia indulged her painful feelings in a shower of tears, which had their source in a variety of the most distressing emotions, and in the disagreeable specimen this visit afforded of the haughty and dictatorial spirit of the family into which her brother was about to enter. Upon reviewing the preceding conversation, however, she reflected with pleasure, that Miss Ravenshawe had never urged her demand as being also the desire of Amelia. She had mentioned indeed her anxiety for her beloved niece; but, if authorised by Miss de Ross, would she not certainly have availed herself of so fine a text by which to enforce her sermon?

From these meditations Julia was roused by the clear voice and joyful accents of a child, in playful spirits, and soon afterwards distinguished

distinguished Lascelles speaking to her brother, and felt assured that he had entered the house accompanied by his friend and Celestina.—"Upon my soul, Somerville," Lascelles was saying, "you will ruin that child!"

"Not the least danger. When I would spoil her, Julia chides, and every thing is again restored to order."

At the same moment the two gentlemen made their appearance, bearing Celestina between them, who had been loaded by the good-natured Horatio with trinkets and sweetmeats.

Partly from an involuntary impulse, and partly to conceal her agitation, Julia caught up the little innocent in her arms, and hid her still-tearful face on her shoulder.—"You must allow her to stay the whole day with us, Lascelles," said Horatio.

"I cannot," Adolphus replied, and added, in a tone more serious—"you know she is my only consolation."

Somerville insisted, and Julia added her entreaties to his. Lascelles was overcome —"Do you request it?" he said. "Then take her; but remember," he continued, fixing his eyes on her with their habitual and pensive look of deepest sensibility, "she is all that remains to me."

How truly has the poet Young exclaimed—"Our very wishes give us not our wish!" A moment before, Julia, with true feminine pertinacity, a little aided, perhaps, by the idea that it might not be always in her power thus to indulge her inclinations, had thought no expression too strong by which she could induce Adolphus to concede to her request; and now that it was granted, but for shame she could have retracted. A degree of solicitude, proceeding perhaps from the painful idea of responsibility Lascelles' words conveyed, rendered her averse to undertaking the charge of so dear a treasure, and gladly would she have restored to his arms the fatal

fatal child, whom he had placed in *hers* with such a solemn warning.

Celestina was usually attended by a Mrs. Meadows, a respectable middle-aged woman, whom Lascelles had known from his infancy. Julia would willingly have included her in her invitation to the Lodge; but it was now too late: the gentlemen were gone out together, on some plan which was to engage them the whole day, and Julia was left with—her desire granted!

She had just placed herself at her harp, an instrument which Celestina had already learned to consider with wonder and delight, and was playing an air, with a simple accompaniment, to the attentive and intelligent child, when the sight of a landau and liveries, that were utterly unknown to her, approaching the Lodge, arrested her attention. A fashionable footman rapped at the door—it was opened, and a lady, without announcing her name, made her appearance, and advanced to

Julia. Presenting a sealed letter which she held in her hand—"Have I the pleasure," she exclaimed, "of seeing Miss Somerville of Berners-street?"

"Excuse me, madam," replied Julia, colouring; "I never lived in Berners-street in my life."

"That is very extraordinary," resumed the lady; "I have this letter from a dear friend, for Miss Somerville, of Berners-street, and was told she now inhabited the Lodge near Rothbury."

"The other circumstances are right," replied Julia, "but I never inhabited the part of London you mention; neither have I the least idea of *who* I have at present the honour of addressing."

The strange lady made no reply to this *leading* observation, but continued to repeat—"Very provoking! I had letters for Miss Somerville of Berners-street. Can you give me any intelligence to what part of the world she has removed?"

Julia very naturally replied that she

knew

knew not of any such person, and was in hopes this definitive answer would induce her incomprehensible guest to take leave. Though unable to account for the cause, the presence of the stranger filled her with confusion, mingled with some degree of terror; and she could not banish the idea that had obtruded itself, of her being one of those agreeable visitors termed impostors, who, for some nefarious purpose, force their way into a house during the absence of the master of it; though what motive could induce a person thus to intrude herself into the Lodge, Miss Somerville was at a loss to discover. With very different emotions was she viewed by the innocent Celestina, who seemed to have taken a great fancy to the fine lady, or to her watch, which hung, with a magnificent complement of seals and trinkets, by her side. With the softest and most endearing caresses the stranger returned the notice of the interesting child. Looking at

her with eyes into which tears suddenly started—" Excuse me, Miss Somerville," she said, " if I ask the name of this fascinating innocent?"

" Her name," replied Julia, " is Lascelles."

" What! Lascelles who married Miss de Ross? I knew both the parties. Ah!" shaking her head, " the parting was a sad story for both! Heavens! how like her father the little creature already is! the same turn of cheek, hazel eye, and beautiful brow! Will you not kiss me, my dear?" she continued, pressing her lips to the yielding down of Celestina's crimson and dimpled cheek—" I remember your father well."

" Well indeed!" thought Julia, as she marked the accuracy of the description.

One trinket among those the stranger had appended to her watch-chain rivetted Celestina's attention above the rest—it was a diamond heart.—" Do not gaze on it so, my love—I cannot give it you," sighed the

the lady, and then added, in a tone of still-deeper sentiment, " I once parted with a heart of greater value."

There was something flighty and unaccountable in her manner of uttering these expressions, that made Miss Somerville doubtful of her intellects; and, for a moment, she fancied it was perhaps the mad lady of quality she had heard of in their neighbourhood, escaped from her keepers, and come to pay her a visit. But a moment's recollection convinced her this surmise was impossible. That lady was advanced in years, and *this* was in the flower and prime of youth. She was a fine woman, with an elegant and fashionable air; yet, at the same time, there was a degree of levity in the whole of her dress, *address*, and deportment, which one would wish changed.

After having exhausted every subject upon which to ground a question, and having no further pretext for staying, the lady at length rose to take leave, with

many

many apologies for the trouble she had given; but first she unhooked from her watchchain a bauble of inferior value to that which had caught Celestina's eye, and gave it to the delighted child.

Upon contemplating her features again, Julia experienced a confused idea that she had seen her somewhere before, though when, or in what place, she could not in the least recollect.

Their way led through a conservatory, erected for Julia by the attentive kindness of her brother, and which opened from the saloon upon a little lawn, near which was the carriage-way. By them ran Celestina, laughing, bounding, and enjoying, in the highest apparent degree, the privilege of accompanying the lady, whose caresses and presents had so completely captivated her heart. At sight of the handsome landau, and its beautiful bay horses, her desires took a new direction.—"Oh, do lift me into the pretty yellow coach!" exclaimed the indulged and petted child.

Without

Without allowing her request to be complied with, Miss Somerville endeavoured to direct her attention to some other object.—"Pray indulge her," cried the stranger; "I can wait a moment."

Seized with unaccountable uneasiness, Julia now gave a more positive denial; but a tall footman, heedless of her opposition, lifted the child into the landau, and placed her on the lady's knees. She uttered but two words—"Drive on!" and in less than a moment the equipage, the lady, and Celestina, were whirled out of sight.

So rapid had been this transaction, that Julia could scarcely believe the evidence of her senses, till, on looking round upon the lately-cheerful scene, now a solitude, she became sensible at once of the extent of her loss, and the fearful responsibility she had incurred. The confused reminiscences of the past too recurred, in mingled yet dazzling colours, to her mind. A ray of light penetrated it—those fine features,

tures, which seemed familiar to her, were those of a picture she had once beheld. The stranger's pretended ignorance was a feint—her first question, respecting Celestina's name, addressed to conceal her real purpose. Celestina's memory was treacherous, but her sympathy was true; the lady who had lured her was, beyond a doubt, her mother—the guilty or unfortunate wife of Lascelles—the "angel niece," Anna de Ross!

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

Oh, ever thus, from childhood's hour,
 I've seen my fondest hopes decay!
I never lov'd a tree or flower,
 But 'twas the first to fade away.
I never nursed a dear gazelle,
 To glad me with its soft, black eye,
But when it came to know me well,
 And love me, it was sure to die!
Now too—the joy, most like divine,
 Of all I ever dreamt or knew,
To see thee, hear thee, call thee mine—
 Oh, misery! must I lose *that* too?

Lalla Rookh.

Returning to the drawing-room in a state of mind more easily conceived than described, Julia observed a folded paper left on the corner of one of the sofas. It was unsealed, and directed—"To those whom it may most concern!" Julia hastily tore it open, and read as follows:—

"Should

"Should she succeed in the design she, for many months, has meditated, the guilty, but unfortunate, wife of Lascelles will leave these few lines in extenuation of her conduct."

A little below was added—

"Mr. Lascelles deprives me of my daughter. He fears, I suppose, contamination for her in my intercourse, and I deserve his severest judgment; but the rights of a mother are inalienable. If they were not so, the society of my child would be absolutely necessary to enable me to endure the cruel tyranny under which I groan. Dear, dear Adolphus! you would disdain the homage of a heart like mine, else would I say how often has *that* weak heart turned to you—how often it has regretted the halcyon days spent beneath your roof! It was an ill return I made to such amiable attentions, such undeviating kindness; yet, might I tell the secrets of my prison-house, that melting tenderness of nature you, of all men, so eminently possess,

possess, would surely prompt one tear of pity for my lot. Every attempt to discover my retreat will prove unavailing. Shrouded in a veil of impenetrable obscurity, I have no fear that any one can find the clew to the labyrinth which conceals me; but rest assured that your daughter will be educated in the strictest principles of honour, and when she comes to a proper age, be introduced into the world with every advantage to which her birth entitles her, even if it so happen that her father should never see her again."

Thunderstruck, overwhelmed, Julia remained, with her head leaning over the table, and her arms mechanically crossed above it, unable to give an order, to form a resolution, even to think of any thing distinctly. The allusions in this strange letter, however extraordinary and unintelligible, struck her but in a secondary manner; Julia was only alive to the impression that

that she was the cause of bringing upon Lascelles the misfortune which, of all others, he most dreaded.

From this stupor a loud knocking aroused her. Starting from her trance, Julia experienced all the terrors of the guilty. It was—it could be no other than Lascelles! The door flew open, and, instead of Mr. Lascelles, was announced Miss Eleanor Sanderson, the most noted proser in Rothbury. Happily unconscious how unwelcome was her intrusion, poor Eleanor took the first seat that offered, determined to have an hour's comfortable gossip. This was a treat she never enjoyed when visiting with her sisters; the full chorus the Miss Sandersons always set up preventing any single voice from being heard to advantage in the concert. Now Eleanor liked the sound of her own voice, and thought this an opportunity for displaying her talent at narration. Thus Philomel, who may sing in vain amid the chattering of noisy birds in the daytime, charms

charms the attentive ear which listens at sober eve to her lonely vesper.

Beginning with a subject which at that time interested all Rothbury, Eleanor asked Miss Somerville if she had seen the county paper?

"No."

"Dear, how droll! I mean, what a sad pity! You'd have seen all the fine speeches that were made about our new market-house. The old cross, you know, is to be cleared away, and there is to be a comfortable new building erected for the market people, you know; and then, when the market people are under cover, they'll not get wet with the rain, you know, because there will be a comfortable building erected to shelter them. And there was a grand county meeting about the market-cross at Rothbury, and my lord Lulworth was in the chair; and old Mr. Birkit was there, and young Mr. Birkit was there, and the rev. Mr. Sams, of Hay-hill, was there, and——"

"And

"And all the county was there," interrupted Julia.

"All!—no! On the contrary, I was going to tell you, the meeting was very ill attended, because they didn't think the market-cross of Rothbury a matter of much consequence. Isn't it droll? But, as I told you before, there were several fine speeches; for my lord Lulworth himself made a long speech; and then squire Birkit, he got up and made a long speech, and Mr. Sams, of Hay-hill——"

"And they all made long speeches, is that it?"

"No, that is not it; Mr. Sams made a very short speech—for he's but a bad hand at making speeches. Droll, for a parson, isn't it? But I'll get you the paper."

"Not on any account, dear Miss Sanderson," exclaimed Julia, unable any longer to restrain herself; "I am at this moment suffering from an excruciating headache, which——"

"A headache!" Dear, how droll!" cried Eleanor,

Eleanor, taking out her work, "I'll sit a a little longer to amuse you. Do you know lady Claremont, lord Lulworth's eldest daughter, married last year, has just lost her husband?—did you ever hear of any thing so tiresome? And her poor babe sickened and died too—provoking! But for that the lady Lulworths—I mean the Miss de Rosses, would have gone to the next assembly. Miss Ravenshawe had seen their dresses, and Miss Ravenshawe has a very superior taste, you know; and Miss Ravenshawe says Miss Emma's taste is the most correct, but Laura's is the most splendid; and Miss Ravenshawe says they ought to patronize the assemblies at Rothbury, and Miss Ravenshawe says ——"

How long poor Eleanor would have gone on, like the drowsy hum of a droning bagpipe, repeating Miss Ravenshawe's sayings, it is impossible to determine; for her communicativeness was stopped before it came to a natural conclusion, by the appearance

pearance of a gossip more formidable than herself.—" Bless me!" she exclaimed, " if there isn't mother Mapletoft making the best of her way across the fields, with her thick ancles and her *paraboues*. I wouldn't meet her for the world in the present distressed state of our family, and I beg you wont believe the quarter of what she'll say to you. But really, when the house is in such confusion at home, it is comfortable to slip away for half-an-hour to a friend."

With these words Eleanor Sanderson shuffled away; and Julia, had she not been so intently occupied upon her own concerns, would have seen something mysterious in them. Mrs. Mapletoft soon explained them—" I hope I did not drive Miss Sanderson away," said the fat lady, gasping for breath, and throwing herself into a chair; " I'm sure, poor thing! I should have condoled with her upon her misfortune, and not cast the slightest blame upon the party——"

" What misfortune?" asked Julia, mechanically;

chanically; for she was, in fact, much more desirous of Mrs. Mapletoft's absence than of any gratification of curiosity.

"La! haven't you heard it? It's all the town talk," resumed Mrs. Mapletoft, delighted to have an anecdote to tell. "Miss Jane Sanderson's gone off with Mr. Tornado; and no such misfortune neither, though I called it so at first, for he's a fine West India fortune: and the manner she carried him off from her friend Miss Belinda Birkit is as good as a comedy."

Even this assurance did not lead Miss Somerville to expect much amusement. She knew Mrs. Mapletoft's usual notions upon that subject; and that a pig overroasted, or a little child spoiling its Sunday clothes in the kennel, were always reckoned by her incidents sufficiently comic to justify this comparison with the highest effort of the dramatic art. Julia therefore simply observed—"I thought Mr. Tornado had left the country."

"Oh, my dear ma'am, that was only a

rose take care; and syllogisms, in love and war, you know, are always allowable." (Possibly the lady, who took as great liberties with the French as the English Dictionary, meant a *ruse de guerre.*) "He remained in the neighbourhood," continued Mrs. Mapletoft, "and corresponded with Belinda Birkit, under cover to Jane Sanderson. How she managed to make him transcribe his addresses to herself, I really can't imagine; and, recollecting the fine friendship between the ladies, I was at first quite incredible upon the subject; but I am just come from reading a letter shewn me by an intimate friend of the parties, which Jane wrote to Bell the evening previous to her elopement. I'll try to recollect the words; but really my memory's so tenacious, I am afraid I can only remember the end. Jane said to her—'Friendship is the second sentiment in nature; but 'tis no treachery to put love before it. I prefer my Belinda's interest to every thing in the world

except

except my own; but her elder sister will remind her that 'charity begins at home.' Did you ever hear of such a conclusion? *That* comes of fine writing, I say. Miss Jane was so refined and so penurious, she could hardly bear to hear any body talk but herself; and I'm sure, many's the day and oft she has given me quite a headache with her taciturnity." (The old lady meant loquacity, but usually thought one long word as good as another.) "Then," she pursued, "it was always upon such disinterested subjects, French, or Italian, or Greek. Well, you may guess there was a fine blow-up at Bear Hall."

"Yes," said Julia, "I suppose old Mr. Birkit himself must have been indignant at such a wanton outrage to his daughter's feelings."

"He! Lord bless you! When he's not after the hounds, he hasn't the grace to think of any thing but his pipe, and reading Registers, and Examiners, and such like polemical works as are ventilated about

the country, to serve the worst of purposes. Mr. Birkit's a patriot, you know, and likes that every body should enjoy liberty but his own family. But the rest were thrown into fine confusion. I called at the Hall to-day, out of charity; but poor Miss Bell was invincible, and, I fear, will never shew her face again, with pleasure, in the country."

Here Mrs. Mapletoft was interrupted by an involuntary exclamation from Julia —"Good Heavens! Mr. Lascelles and my brother!" she exclaimed, changing colour, and ready to faint.

Had she invented a contrivance to send her unwelcome visitor away, Julia could not have hit upon one more effectual, for Mr. Lascelles was Mrs. Mapletoft's aversion; but the truth was, she really did perceive, from the window, Horatio and Lascelles most unexpectedly approaching the house. Mrs. Mapletoft had hardly time to effect a precipitate retreat, when the two gentlemen entered, arm in arm, and

and Lascelles came up to Julia—"You will accuse me, I fear, Miss Somerville, of almost female mutability," he said, while a blush of confusion overspread his fine face; "a sister of mine has surprised me with a flying visit at my hermitage, and is so desirous of seeing Celestina, that she has deputed me with a request that you would allow her——"

Lascelles paused, struck by the alarming expression of Julia's countenance. Unable to explain the fatal incidents of the morning, she handed him the letter in silence. He read it attentively, looked at her again, and saw the confirmation that Anna had succeeded.—"Oh, reproach me!" Julia at length exclaimed; "any thing but this dreadful silence I can endure—I deserve it for my imprudence in urging my request."

Adolphus looked at her with mingled consternation and pity—"Reproach you, Julia!" he repeated—Julia, that love-born name, which lips like his alone seemed

 formed

formed to utter. He paused, and withdrew his eyes from her; but their expression had already told her she was forgiven. He took the letter up for a reperusal. On arriving at the words, "The cruel tyranny under which I groan," Julia could perceive, by the undulation of his lip, that he particularly remarked them. "Unhappy Anna!" after a pause, he exclaimed; "while she was *mine*, she never knew affliction!"

These words forcibly struck Miss Somerville. In thought she involuntarily demanded—"And could the woman be found, bearing so base a heart, as causelessly to desert such a husband?"

After musing some moments—"We must not," said Lascelles, with an air of calmness, which Julia saw but too plainly was assumed to spare her feelings—"We must not waste time in idly lamenting this mischance, but rather devise some means of remedying it. Meanwhile," he added, forcing a smile which belied the anguish

and

and solicitude of his heart, " it might be worse: our little girl is not fallen among gipsies. Every care will, most assuredly, be taken of my Celestina till I recover her; but *when* that will be——" He interrupted himself, and fell back into painful musings. Julia was angry with him for not treating his friends with more confidence. Anna's own confession had exonerated him from every shadow of blame on the subject of their parting; then why should he not explain those allusions in her letter, which were still obscure?

At length, starting from a long reverie, he said—"It is the only way. My friends, I must bid you a long, perhaps a last adieu; for never will I see you again without Celestina. I possess a clew that, I think, will lead to the discovery of her concealment. Should I fail——"

" You will still have friends," interrupted the sympathizing Horatio, " to support and console you under the heavy trial."

 " Oh,

"Oh, don't talk of consolation, Somerville!" interrupted Lascelles in his turn, with a burst of anguish he had, till now, with difficulty suppressed; "if that child be torn from me, I shall never know happiness more."

Such strong domestic feelings, in a man so young, so pleasing, and so singularly circumstanced, made a deep impression on the mind of Julia, and doubled her remorse in being the innocent cause of his affliction. He did not suffer it to dwell on her mind; but, turning with recovered tenderness towards the brother and sister, and taking a hand of each, he pressed them, thus united, to his throbbing heart. —"Oh, how exquisitely painful," he cried, "is the moment of parting with friends so much endeared! To you I owe the few moments of unmingled delight I have known since I first took up my residence in this retirement. Your candour and generosity restored my self-esteem. Dear, sympathizing friends! for once you think of

of me, you will be a thousand times presented to my memory! We part—but perhaps," he added, in a lower tone, "it is best it should be so."

Shortly afterwards, Somerville and his sister were informed that Lascelles had made arrangements with another clergyman to take his place at Rothbury, while he set out in search of the lost Celestina. Horatio was too much occupied with his approaching happiness to think long upon the subject; but the wanderer was followed by the fervent prayers and wishes of Julia.

CHAPTER III.

> Yet to have doubted her well-painted truth,
> Had been to want the primal grace of youth,
> Credulity, that scorns, with generous heat,
> Alike to practise or suspect deceit.
>
> MISS SEWARD.

THE marriage of Horatio Somerville with the honourable Amelia De Ross was celebrated soon afterwards, with a splendour which, to say the least, was unnecessary in his circumstances; and the happy pair set off for a villa at Richmond, which belonged to Amelia's sister, lady Claremont, and which the recently-made widow could no longer bear to inhabit. Thus Love lit his lamp in the mansion which had so lately been only irradiated by the melancholy funeral torch; and such is, in human

man life, the swift succession of joy and sorrow.

Julia accompanied the bridal party, but was not long in discovering that she had dwindled into a most unnecessary personage. Enchanted with the tenderness, the passion, the devotion of his bride, Horatio saw upon earth no object but his Amelia. He might literally be said to anticipate her slightest wish, and live but to oblige her; while, on her part, the soft eyes of Amelia reflected, in the universe, but one being, and that being was Horatio.

Julia wandered through the enchanted solitudes of Clairville, sometimes accompanied by her brother and sister-in-law, but more frequently alone, and gave free scope to her naturally melancholy and musing disposition.—"I have ceased to be essential to my brother's happiness," she said. "Indeed I am necessary to the happiness of no one human being; yet do not murmur, Julia—let not the poisons of envy and jealousy add their stings to

your former sources of sorrow. The time may come when Horatio will again be able to see an affectionate sister, as well as a youthful bride; in the meanwhile let me find comfort in thinking he is happy."

From these pictures of felicity her thoughts reverted to Adolphus—to Adolphus, as she last had seen him, so young, so amiable, so solitary! and deprived, alas! *by her*, of the treasure which alone had imparted some value to his existence. She experienced the most lively desire to learn whether he had discovered any trace of Celestina; but neither this, nor any other agreeable occurrence, seemed likely to diversify the solitude of poor Julia.

Attended by a servant, she sometimes extended her rambles, and visited, on horseback, the most beautiful objects in the vicinity. An illness, which she caught by imprudently prolonging her ride in the sun, put a stop, for some time, to these interesting excursions; but, by awakening in Horatio's heart some portion of its fraternal

ternal tenderness, amply recompensed the affectionate Julia for this trifling privation. As she began to approach towards convalescence, she one day spoke to Amelia, with enthusiasm, of a particular spot she had visited, and proposed, the first day she was strong enough, that her sister-in-law should accompany her thither. Julia was surprised to observe a cloud gather upon Amelia's lovely brow, and to receive from her a short, and, as she thought, disobliging answer. She looked towards her brother for an explanation of this phenomenon, but could only gather, from his countenance, that he was of the same opinion as Amelia. Finding him, in a fortunate moment, alone, she at length learned the cause of this misunderstanding.—" My poor Amelia," said he, " would never forgive me for mentioning it; but, to say the truth, she was hurt at your behaviour about the little horse."

Julia, amazed, waited for a farther insight into this unintelligible accusation.

" I do

"I do think," resumed Horatio, "while you were unable to go out yourself, it would rather have done your pony good to have suffered her to ride it."

"I would have done so with pleasure," answered Miss Somerville; "but she never made me any such request."

"Oh, Julia, you surely must mistake! She says she had a great fancy for it, but that you preferred letting the animal grow idle and restive in the stable to suffering another to mount him."

"And can you believe this improbable story? I will go directly to Mrs. Somerville, and get her to clear up the mistake, which must have originated in some stupidity of the groom."

"Not on your life, Julia!" exclaimed Horatio, vehemently laying his hand on her arm. "My poor little lamb entreated I would not mention the matter to you; but she declared, with tears, *that* was not the only instance in which you did not seem to love her as formerly."

"And

"And you listen to these vague accusations, Somerville! and you admit them against your poor Julia—against the sister who was the first means, by drawing her to the house, of bringing you acquainted with Miss De Ross—who pointed out to you her merits, while you, as yet, seemed insensible to them. Oh, Amelia! Horatio! have I been mistaken in both your characters?" A shower of bitter tears succeeded this passionate exclamation; and Horatio, who was really one of the best-natured men in the world, for the first time felt himself not quite happy between his sister and his wife.

This cloud was soon dispersed; but Julia could never discover what had induced Mrs. Somerville thus secretly to complain of her to her husband; and the doubt which this conduct raised greatly diminished the former charm of their intercourse.

Some months had been now spent at Richmond, when, one morning, at breakfast,

fast, Amelia entered, with open letters in her hand, and, in some perturbation, addressed Horatio—"My dearest love! here is lady Claremont wants her villa again; must we go back to that odious Rothbury?"

"My sweetest lamb! I suppose we must; for what else is there to be done?"

"But, my heart! the house wants such a variety of things to make it habitable; and then the neighbourhood is made up of such an intolerable set. And there will be Mrs. Mapletoft, and Mrs. Sanderson, and aunt Ravenshawe, with their congratulations—ah, how detestable, all to go over again! And if I do hate any body on earth," continued Amelia, her mild eyes, for the first time, striking fire, "it is odious aunt Ravenshawe!"

Julia looked at her with amazement; but Horatio only replied, in an irresolute tone—"I suppose then, my life! you would have me give up the Lodge, and take a house in town?"

"Not

"Not for *me*, my heart! but I am sure it would be much more for your own advantage and interest. And there is my brother William writes me word, that my father and sisters are all coming up to town, and that they will be quite disappointed if I don't go out and shew myself a little this winter. And lady Claremont says there is a very pretty house in ——— Street she could take for us, quite moderate, though elegant and genteel."

"Well, my heart! be it as you please." Horatio said this at the moment to rid himself of present trouble; but reflection only strengthened the temptation he felt to try the joys and gaieties of London again. Julia was consulted, but evidently more as a matter of form than with a real desire to have her opinion; and such being the state of things, the bridal party, early in the season, found themselves established near their relations, in a fashionable part of London.

CHAP-

CHAPTER IV.

Wit, beauty, goodness, sentiment refined,
The brightest genius, with the purest mind;
Quick nerves, to sympathy too nicely strung,
And sportive innocence, for ever young;
Gay beaming smiles, and each still-varying grace;
Accordant harmony of voice and face;
Sweet chat that might despairing anguish soothe;
A soul all energy—a heart all truth—
Give it but wings, 'tis angel, goddess, elf;
Or add caprice, and—Ella—'tis thyself! BUTLER.

As soon as they were settled in their new house in London, the bridal party were involved in a round of pleasurable engagements, and Julia was introduced to the members of lord Lulworth's family with whom she was as yet unacquainted. Lady Claremont was the only one whom she had not yet seen, and the young widow wrote her sister word that she

she should join their circle in the course of the winter.

In one of her moments of good-humour and confidence, Amelia gave her sister-in-law some insight into this lady's history and character.—"You must take care Charlotte does not fall in love with you," said she, in a manner between earnest and jest, "for I know she is, just now, on the look-out for a female friend. She married the man of her choice. Lord Claremont was quite one of madame De Souza's heroes, very handsome, very haughty, and of that miserable capricious temper that did not allow her a moment's ease. Since his death, she has abjured love, and professes to build her hopes of happiness entirely upon friendship; but my opinion is, that she will marry again before the end of the winter."

About the time she was expected, lady Claremont arrived in town; and Julia felt, at first sight, more prepossessed in her favour than in that of any of her family.

ly. Though her features were all beautiful, it was impossible, at first, to remark any thing but her eyes, which possessed a quickness of movement, a vivacity, and yet a softness, very rarely seen united.

Amelia had prepared her for something uncommon in the manners of her sister, and therefore she was not surprised at the enthusiastic way in which she expressed herself on every subject.

A poem, which had lately appeared, the production of a friend, was the object of her present zeal, and she was vainly endeavouring to kindle Mrs. Somerville's admiration to an equal height with her own. —"You must promise me immediately," she said, "to get 'Alcanzor.' It is by lady Felicia Melcomb, and surpasses all her former efforts. The Graces waltz in every line."

"You know I am not fond of poetry," answered Amelia, in the mawkish tone she had lately adopted, or rather resumed; while Julia, whose taste was formed upon the

the purest models, could not help being startled at the expression, "The Graces waltz in every line."

"But whether you like it or not, you must join in supporting it," resumed the energetic lady; "for there is a party provoking enough to cry it down, merely because it is by a lady, and not one of those few names that have undisputed possession of the public ear."

"Not undisputed," observed Julia, who remembered the senseless cavils to which she had often listened, with astonishment, in country circles; "if even those writers who possess the general suffrage of the world in their favour, were to canvass it by single votes, they would be surprised to find how many were withheld either by jealousy, malignity, or total want of taste."

Lady Claremont looked at her for a moment, with an expression of countenance, flattering, yet difficult to define, and

and then abruptly exclaimed—" Vastly well said! will you be kind enough to say that again?"

Accustomed as she was to the passion for ridicule, which is the drawback on the most polished societies, Julia would certainly have considered this as a little quiz of her ladyship's, but for the look of polite and earnest attention that succeeded and enforced her request; while Mrs. Somerville laughed and enjoyed the scene, adding—" I assure you Charlotte means what she says—she is in agonies to hear you talk."

" As I find it impossible to repeat what I have once said," replied Julia, with good-humour, " I will endeavour to give her ladyship something better—my favourite passage in lady Felicia's poem."

Julia then repeated some very beautiful lines, to which she did such ample justice, that lady Claremont was delighted at the delicacy of the compliment to her friend and

and herself; while Mrs. Somerville observed—"Those were your brother's favourite lines; I did not know they were also yours!"

"We seldom differ," Julia modestly replied. "From childhood I have been accustomed to look up to his decisions as the guide of mine. When I give utterance to an observation or a sentiment, my mind leans on his, in full security that his reply will furnish matter for interesting discussion, or confirm my remark, by added facts and observations of his own."

"Say that again!" repeated lady Claremont, pleased with a picture of a union so tender and blameless; but seeing Julia really distressed by the eccentricity of her manner, she made a blushing apology, which derived peculiar grace from her innocent and interesting countenance; and very feminine style of beauty.

During the remainder of the visit, she took care not to startle her new acquaintance by any more abrupt requisitions; but when she could do it unobserved, would steal

steal a peep at her, as if she was comparing her with some object in her own mind; then recovering herself, resume a desultory conversation with Amelia; and this continued till she rose to take leave.— "A-propos, I had forgot one thing!" said her ladyship—"You are not to say to any one, for your life, the poem is lady Felicia's. It would be too bad for a woman of her rank to be exposed to the attacks of critics. She only trusted the secret to me, because she knew me to be discreet."

"*Comme une coup de canon!*" said Amelia aside. "You go with us to the opera to-night?"

Lady Claremont replied she did not like yet to go into public; but Amelia having urged that she wished her sister's opinion of the new decorations of her box, this important consideration overcame the fair widow's scruples, and the party for the opera was formed.

"*C'en est fait,*" said Amelia, laughing. "You have made the conquest I foretold.

told. Poor Charlotte is absolutely smitten with you, and I shall hear of nothing to-night but Miss Somerville's merits. Well, I forgive you your advantage. I am not jealous of your favour with lady Claremont."

Though this was said playfully, there was something in it that struck a chill damp through Julia's heart. Pensively she prepared to dress for the opera, and was only interrupted in her reverie by the unexpected entrance of her brother.

"I have brought you a set of the 'Pictured Mocha,' as Darwin fancifully calls it," he said, at the same time placing a very elegant box of ornaments before her. —"I thought the sober gem might suit my Julia's serious taste. They are admired by gayer ladies too, for I have just presented Amelia with a set. And now I think of it, you need not tell Mrs. Somerville," he hesitatingly added, "who gave you these."

 Why

"Why so? why make a mystery of it?"

"Indeed!" replied Horatio, rather confused, "I can give no rational reason; but the little angel loves me with such jealous susceptibility—such romantic affection, that the idea of my bestowing a similar tribute of regard upon another, as upon herself, although *that other* be my sister, would give her pain."

"And do you act wisely, Horatio, in encouraging in your wife a disposition to cherish that poisonous weed, jealousy, along with the rose of love?"

"*Point de rose sans épine, Julie!* The little creature has somehow taken panic at your really-superior understanding; she is in perpetual dread lest it might lead me to undervalue *hers*. She fears your former influence. What do I say? She fears my old servants—my friends—my books—my paintings—every thing, in short, which might divide my love and attention with her. Never did I see affec-

tion

tion so apprehensively delicate; but, at the same time, never did I meet with any so engaging."

"May her tenderness prove your compensation, Horatio, for any thing you may lose by her! Yet permit this observation to my sincere attachment. You have ever been to me a brother the most kind and generous, and must acknowledge that, in return, like sir Peter Teazle, I never refused you my advice. Infuse a little firmness into that ductile mind. Instead of injuring, it will only strengthen and elevate the sensibility of your Amelia. So may you, notwithstanding the general mistrust in human felicity, find her love indeed a thornless rose."

The cloud that had gathered on Horatio's brow at the beginning of this little admonition, was completely dispersed before Julia had ceased speaking. She had often found that a friendly counsel, couched in the guise of pleasantry, had more success with the gay and sanguine temper

 of

of her brother, than one given with an appearance of greater gravity and earnestness. The effect was so on this occasion.

Harmony and good-humour were completely established between the brother and sister. Horatio kissed the fair hand she extended to him with an affectionate and brotherly politeness; at the same time he could not help observing—"Now I durst not even do that if my dear little angel were by."

The party were not long seated in their box at the opera, when Amelia asked their opinion upon its interior drapery and decorations, which had been finished with much expence and taste; while the box itself was, as Mrs. Somerville justly observed, not only the most indispensable, but the cheapest thing in the world, it being held in partnership with lady Claremont.

Unwilling to offend, and unable cordially to approve, Julia kept silence while Amelia descanted on draperies, and fringes, and

and tassels; but lady Claremont, who had observed her reluctance with an expression of arch humour lurking in her countenance, was determined she should not so easily escape.—"Now I am sure, by Miss Somerville's silence," she said, "she differs from you, Amelia. Am I not right?" turning to Julia; "are you not of my opinion that pale blue would be much prettier than crimson?"

Julia saw clearly that her ladyship perceived her silence proceeded from a very different cause. She also saw that lady Claremont could not resist indulging in her sportive vein at her expence. Happily she was saved from the necessity of a reply by Mrs. Somerville's calling her attention, with an expression of admiration, to the business of the stage, in which she was herself, or affected to be, deeply interested. The subject of the opera was the story of Alcestis; and during the course of the representation, the soft eyes of Amelia often wandered in search of those of Horatio.

Every passage that celebrated the triumph of wedded love was marked in the eloquent comment of her speaking eye; and Julia could not help saying to herself—"If this sentiment be accompanied by some weaknesses, surely never did weakness apper more excusable."

After the opera, while Mrs. Somerville was waiting for her carriage, and Somerville was going to inquire about it, the ladies separated into little groups, chatting with different friends, as chance happened to direct. Suddenly Miss Somerville observed lord Lulworth, Mrs. De Ross, lady Claremont, and, in short, the whole family, except Amelia herself, who still held Julia by the arm, surrounding a distinguished figure, who, from the darkness of his complexion, and a certain travelled air, struck her as being recently arrived from some distant region. Inquiries and congratulations were poured forth on every side. At length, lady Claremont, breaking from the circle, hastily advanced to

Mrs.

Mrs. Somerville, and exclaimed—"Dearest Amelia, would you believe it possible? Our hero, our beloved cousin, Armine De Ross, is restored to us!—Captain De Ross, speak to your cousin," continued her officious ladyship—"Amelia, this is De Ross, escaped, almost by miracle, from the serpents and tigers of Africa."

"To meet a slower, surer poison here," the stranger whispered, in a voice only to be distinguished by Amelia, upon whom he bent, while he spoke, with a mingled expression of reproach and anguish, the full force of his dark and penetrating eye.

Mrs. Somerville gazed wildly on him, uttered an hysterical exclamation, and fell back in a fit. Shocked at the violent effects of his imprudence, the stranger, too late, would have given worlds to recall his hasty expressions. Advancing before any other person could make an offer of assistance, he seemed, by right of blood, or some still-dearer title, to claim the privilege of alone supporting her sinking

 frame,

frame, while he watched, with intense and agonizing anxiety, the revival of Amelia. Before her recollection could be restored, Mr. Somerville returned. He eagerly approached his wife, and demanded the cause of her indisposition? Recovering the use of speech, but scarcely that of reason, Amelia opened her dying eyes, and faintly murmured—"Oh, pardon! I so surely thought he had perished—I was deceived—barbarously deceived!"

"For Heaven's sake, Mrs. Somerville, recollect how many eyes you have upon you!" Julia whispered, with an anxiety which, it must be owned, arose more upon her brother's account than Amelia's. Horatio looked at the majestic figure on whom Amelia still, almost unconsciously, reclined. He was officiously introduced to him by his other relations as lord Lulworth's nephew, captain De Ross.

Somerville scarcely understood the meaning of the scene, but his mind had some misgivings that all was not as it

should

should be, when lady Claremont, with triumphant volubility, undertook the explanation of the whole.—" It was such a delight—such a surprise to them—their dearest cousin, captain De Ross, who had been supposed to have perished in an expedition into the interior of Africa, had returned with lord V—— and doctor C——. It was too much for poor Amelia. Dear soul! she had such a lively affection for her family!"

During this short eclaircissement, Mrs. Somerville had time to recover herself; and Somerville, eager to break from the circle, immediately conducted her to her carriage. He had returned scarcely any reply to the civil expressions of lord Lulworth and captain De Ross, and, during the course of their drive home, had an air of unusual thoughtfulness and vexation.

The reflections of Julia were still more bitter.—" And is it for this false diamond," she mentally asked, " that I am expected to resign my place in thy affections? Oh,

my brother! what if the extent of my fond fears should prove true! if the tenderness for which you have exchanged every other domestic delight, instead of the spotless effusions of a virgin heart, should be only the studied result of a faint reminiscence of that spontaneous preference felt for an earlier claimant!"

The following day nothing occurred to confirm the apprehensions of Julia. Amelia behaved remarkably well; and in a subsequent visit that captain De Ross, as a relation, paid at the house, she neither evinced a suspicious degree of interest or indifference.

Julia's maid, Mrs. Marsden, had previously lived some years in the Lulworth family, and was perfectly acquainted with every particular of Mrs. Somerville's early history. For three mortal days and nights, this faithful damsel waited, in an agony of communicativeness, in hopes that her young mistress would give her some pretext for disburthening a part of her knowledge.

ledge. Vain was her hope of obtaining such an opportunity from the modest and discreet Julia. At length human patience could hold out no more; and as Mrs. Marsden was undressing her lady, she thus spoke—" Well, to be sure, miracles will never cease! Only to think, ma'am, of young captain De Ross's coming to life again! I was never so surprised in all my born days! But I doubt there were other folks more surprised than I was. However, as I used to say to Mr. Linton, I dare to say it's all for the best; and there can't be a handsomer and sweeter-tempered gentleman in the world than Mr. Somerville."

" And what has Mr. Somerville to do with captain De Ross's return?" said Julia, gravely.

" Do you ask me, ma'am?" replied the cautious waiting-woman?

" Certainly I ask you the meaning of that expression."

" Do you ask me, ma'am?" repeated

 Marsden,

Marsden, delighted. "Why then I'll tell you the whole story. But when first I came into this family, Mrs. Somerville (my young lady, Miss Amelia that was) told me never to mention even that she knew captain De Ross, *unless you should ask me* something about it: and you can't but say, ma'am, I've faithfully obeyed her orders."

Having thus carefully satisfied her scruples, the conscientious waiting-woman went on—"To be sure they were a charming couple; and if ever there was a pair of true loviers on earth, it was Miss Amelia and captain De Ross. But what was to be done? He'd no money, and she had no money; and my lady said it could never come to good. Yet still my lord was so fond of his nephew, and Mr. De Ross and he were such friends, and, all things considered, to my thinking it would have been brought to bear but for Miss Ravenshawe. Well, ma'am, *she* flounced and bounced, and said, if ever the matter was mentioned again, she'd have no more hand in

in her niece's concerns—she would give her up entirely—there was an end of it. So my lord was afraid of her fine fortune going out of the family, and he gave way; and captain De Ross went off, in a kind of despair like, on a hexpetition to the hexterior of Africa; and Miss Amelia was sent home to her aunt Ravenshawe's."

Here Julia recollected the hatred Mrs. Somerville had expressed for Miss Ravenshawe, and shuddered. Marsden resumed —"Well, ma'am, as Miss Amelia had met with her cousin De Ross one time she was staying at Torpington Castle, her aunt Ravenshawe, who had adopted her like, was quite shy of letting her go among her friends for any time again; and she led her a stupid sort of life at home, keeping her from every thing she liked, and making her to do all she disliked, till at last the news came of captain De Ross's having been eaten up by the savages; and for a long time Miss Amelia never smiled more. And she lost all her fine colour—*that* she

never

never recovered, and became quite another thing to what she had been, though still very pretty, ma'am, as you see. But, ma'am, if you had ever seen her, as I have, at Torpington, with her brother and captain De Ross, bounding, for all the world, like a nymph of the woods, as the man in the book says,—well, though Miss Ravenshawe never cleverly forgave the affair of captain De Ross, it was always 'my angel niece' in public, and all her desire was to marry her off to some gentleman of fortune; for she was constantly afraid she would give her the slip, and patch up some marriage for herself, like Miss Anna De Ross—Mrs. Lascelles, I mean. Ay, that was 'another bad match,' as the man in the play says; and I'm sure, if ever there was a Christian man belied, it was Mr. Lascelles."

Julia had several times experienced a desire to check the loquacity of her waiting-maid. Still there was an interest in the name of Lascelles, that made her unwilling

willing to do it at the very moment she pronounced that name.

As she had heard the worst, Julia thought she might as well listen also to the justification of that amiable young man; she therefore said, with a smile, "Well, Marsden, and what of Mr. Lascelles?"

"Do you ask me, ma'am?" repeated the cautious damsel. "Why then, ma'am, since you ask me, I'll tell you all how it happened. You know, ma'am, Mr. Lascelles was engaged to travel with Mr. De Ross; but Mr. De Ross was taken ill at the Hague, and obliged to return home. However, ma'am, he liked Mr. Lascelles so much, that nothing would serve him but Mr. Lascelles must stay at Torpington Castle, and study with him. This was the time of Miss Amelia's sad disappointment with captain De Ross. Lady Claremont was on a visit, and saw nothing of that affair, else I don't think she'd be so auspicious about him. Well, ma'am, Miss Anna

Anna De Ross had been in love with her cousin too, but he never would look at her, he was so entirely taken up with Miss Amelia, which made her very angry; and before that, she had been near going off with a captain Clavering of our militia, only Mr. De Ross found it all out, and prevented it. So, ma'am, the moment she saw Mr. Lascelles, she fell desperately in love; and no wonder, ma'am, for he was a sweet, charming, handsome man to look at, as you must remember very well, ma'am. To be sure, he could not help seeing the young lady's *pangchang*, for a postis would have perceived it; but nothing upon earth could be more proper, and modest and distant, than his behaviour; and every thing he did seemed to say, —'I remember you are lord Lulworth's daughter, and I am not to look at you.' Perhaps his merit was the less; for, to my fancy, he didn't like such a bold young lady; but that's neither here nor there. So this conduct put poor Miss Anna to her

her wit's end; and I declare, ma'am, I've seen her in a ball-room, when the house was full of company, and the servants was let to look in—I've seen her behave so foolish, ma'am, that poor Mr. Lascelles has absolutely blushed for her. She ought to have known better too, for she was no chick, as Mr. Linton says; she was a good year or two older than Mr. Lascelles."

Here Julia could not help reflecting on Miss Ravenshawe's exaggerations in the story she had told her of the "angel niece," the "sweet innocent girl of sixteen, whom he had misled."

Marsden resumed—"At length Miss Anna bethought herself of writing him a letter. I can't now tax my memory with the contents—I only know it was very fine, and, for all the world, like a stage play; but just as she was thinking how to convey it to him, somehow or other my lady got a hold of it, and then, ma'am, there was a combustion indeed! Miss Ravenshawe, to be sure, is an outrageous

lady

lady betimes; but, Lord bless you! ma'am, 'tis comparing the lamb with the tiger, to compare Miss Ravenshawe to her sister, my poor, dear, late lady, lady Lulworth." Here Marsden put her handkerchief to her eyes, then continued—"Never, in my life, did I see a woman in such a conflagration! She instantly taxed Mr. Lascelles and her daughter with carrying on a celestial correspondence. Mr. Lascelles defended both himself and the young lady, as well he might; but all to no purpose. So, ma'am, Mr. Lascelles quitted the castle, and Miss Anna was confined to her own room. Mr. Linton, his man, says, he never saw a gentleman so troubled in mind as his master was on this occasion; and all the while, he was certain sure, he was not the least bit in love with Miss De Ross. Still he applied to my lord Lulworth, and even to Miss Ravenshawe, and called, and wrote, to justify the young lady, but all with the same bad success as before. After a time Miss Anna appeared in

in company, as usual; but in private her *friends* treated her very cruelly indeed, and set a watch upon all her actions, so that she was little better than a prisoner at large. And the affair was talked of all over the country; and, of course, her friends at Rothbury had no better amusement than pulling her character to pieces; but she bore it all very cheerfully for the sake of Mr. Lascelles. So then came on the affair of the living of Rothbury. The old incumbent died, and my lord Rothbury, it is said, wrote a very pretty letter to Mr. Lascelles, to the effect that, though he had never set eyes on him, he knew his merit and qualifications, and preferred him to all the other persons that were desirous of the living. So, what does Mr. Lascelles do, but immediately write another very pretty letter to Miss Anna De Ross, telling her that he did not come forward sooner, because he had nothing to offer; but if, after having suffered such persecution for his sake, she would consent to share the

conference

conference of which he was now possessed, it should be the business of his life to make her amends—and all the rest, you know, ma'am, that they say in love-letters. Could any thing be handsomer? I was with my lady—my young lady, I mean, when this letter was conveyed to her, and knew, by the change in her looks, that something pleasant had happened. So she couldn't help shewing it to me; and when I had read it—'Well, Marsden,' says she, 'what do you think?'—'Think, ma'am!' says I; 'why that it is a very pretty letter, ma'am, and that Mr. Lascelles is a very pretty-behaved gentleman, and that I should not be sorry, ma'am, to be at this moment in your ladyship's place.' So at that she laughed and blushed a little.—'Oh, you wicked woman!' says she, stopping her ears, 'do you want me to run away with Mr. Lascelles? I must not listen to you any more.' So, with that, ma'am, we began our arrangements; and, as Miss Anna had behaved remarkably well of late, she was

was allowed to spend a few days at the house of Miss Nelthorpe at Rothbury; and that's the reason Miss Ravenshawe can't abide Miss Nelthorpe, though she has her to tea once a-year, to save appearances; for from Miss Nelthorpe's house Miss De Ross was married to Mr. Lascelles.

"Well, to be sure, at Torpington Castle they was all in a fine consternation; and my lord flew out—and my lady flew out —it was which should be most obstropulous: and as for Miss Rosilda Ravenshawe, I declare to goodness I don't think she could have been angrier, or so angry, ma'am, if, instead of her niece, Mr. Lascelles had gone for to marry herself. To hear them talk, one would have thought that, instead of its being a young gentleman of good family, who married a young lady without a shilling, Mr. Lascelles had been the meanest person in the world, and carried off an heiress with fifty thousand pounds. My lady, who had been a long while in a bad state of health, died soon afterwards:

afterwards: this Miss Ravenshawe always lays to the account of the marriage, though it had no more to do with the marriage than with what is doing in Japan. Then a reconciliation was patched up for Miss Anna, whom her father was always fond of; but lord Lulworth would never see Mr. Lascelles. Mrs. Lascelles spent a good deal of time at Torpington without him; and though Mr. Lascelles laid out a great deal upon Ivied Porch, and made the house and grounds as pretty as pretty could be for her, still Mr. Linton says he thinks he was, somehow, happiest when she was away. But when her little girl was born, every body thought, for sure, she would grow more domesticated. To the contrary, she was more at Torpington than ever, and began to be talked of with a lord Oglethorpe, who was very much there. What she could see in lord Oglethorpe, ma'am, I never could divine; for he was as ugly as Mr. Lascelles was handsome, and old enough to be her father. Howsever,

ever, they said he was a great scholard, and a great speechifier, and something—oh! now I forget; but I know it meant either a wit or an horridter. So one time that she had written to Mr. Lascelles for to fix the day of her return, she, somehow, changed her mind, and, instead of taking the road to Ivied Porch, set off with lord Oglethorpe for his seat in Yorkshire. Then the whole family set up a full cry, worse than ever, after Mr. Lascelles—'He must have been the most negligent or most barbarous of husbands, or their angel Anna could not have thought of such a thing.' Well, ma'am, what became of her after that is a mystery; as the man in the book says, it was quite a huddled-up affair. Mr. Lascelles could gain no trace or tidings of her, and at the same time her relations almost persecuted him out of the country. Some say *they* know where she is, and keep her moped up in an old ruinated castle, nobody but themselves can tell where, and seeing nothing all day long but the

the owls flitting among the ivy: others says she is still with lord Oglethorpe. But whether it be the owls or lord Oglethorpe, to my thinking, she has made but a bad exchange for such a man as Mr. Lascelles."

Julia thought so too, and, in reviewing the disastrous history of this weak and guilty creature, could not forbear calling to mind the aphorism of the ancient Roman—"Those whom the gods are determined to destroy, they first deprive of understanding."

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

Clotilda. Hath time no power upon thy hopeless love?
Imogen. Yea, time hath power, and what a power I'll
tell thee—
A power to change the pulses of the heart
To one dull throb of ceaseless agony—
To hush the sigh on the resigned lip,
And lock it in the heart—freeze the hot tear,
And bid it on the eyelid hang for ever.
Such power hath time o'er me. MATURIN.

Successful love may wear itself away;
The wretched are the faithful; 'tis their fate
To have all feeling, save the one, decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into ocean pour. *Lament of Tasso.*

THE history of the "two angels" left the mind of Julia a prey to the most bitter and painful reflections. By a natural return upon herself, she could not forbear admiring the sort of fatality that seemed

to follow the peculiar infatuation of her brother. But for this passion for appearing other than he really was, Somerville would never have been, in the eyes of either aunt or niece, a desirable alliance. Julia, in the little history she gave Amelia, had indeed placed his situation in a juster point of view; but we always incline to believe what we wish, rather than what militates against our inclinations; and Amelia's first object, at that time, was to escape from Miss Ravenshawe. Yet those would do her wrong who should imagine Mrs. Somerville wholly destitute of good qualities. To the violent temper and passions which she shared with her aunt and mother, Amelia added something in her own character that was noble, elevated, and tender; but these dispositions never having been formed into habits, only displayed themselves by fits and starts, and were insufficient to regulate the tenor of her general conduct. Her aunt had so often and so earnestly repeated to her,

her, that the least outward indication of her feelings was unbecoming in a young lady of her rank in life, that Amelia had succeeded in acquiring that elegant serenity, approaching almost to *mannerism*, which Somerville had noticed in the beginning of their acquaintance; but this culture having never been extended to her heart or mind, the one was left to all its treacherous softness, the other to its dangerous exaltation. Still Mrs. Somerville cherished the purest principles of honour. She determined to fly the dangerous Armine, if she could not behold him with safety; but the struggles she made to smother a reviving flame caused an agitation in her mind that often rendered her temper insupportable. Alternately secure and apprehensive, Amelia passed from the extremes of hysterical dejection to triumphant gaiety; she enjoyed nothing with tranquillity and moderation—she did nothing with consistency and regularity;

 I wrong

I wrong her; she was consistent in the dislike she had taken to poor Julia—a dislike which began very soon after her marriage, but which was confirmed from the unlucky whisper at the opera, that she thought implied an insulting suspicion of her firmness. Her feelings were the most complicated with regard to this unfortunate sister-in-law; for they were composed, in an equal proportion, of respect and contempt—she looked down upon Miss Somerville's connexions and family, and she stood in awe of her talents and understanding. All that tender familiarity, *cette douce égalité*, which had subsisted between the *friends*, before marriage, was banished from the *sisters* after it. It was no longer "Julia" and "Amelia," sweet-sounding and affectionate names; Mrs. Somerville had managed to get rid of them in a manner sufficiently dexterous. The first time Julia addressed her thus in London—"Am I not worthy then to be called

called *sister?*" she replied; and from that moment their intercourse was established upon a different footing.

Persons of real family are not apt to be ridiculously proud of their descent; but to this Amelia was an exception. The daughter of a new-made peer, who can hardly reckon back a single generation without stumbling upon a grocer, could not be more vain of precedence, more tenacious of the "honourable," than was Amelia Somerville; and in a variety of ways she made Julia feel what a presumption she conceived it to be, in her, a merchant's daughter, to venture, though in the most delicate manner, to give advice to the daughter of a nobleman.

A stranger in her brother's house, without rank or rights assigned her, her place taken by the person whom she had first introduced to his notice, every thing conspired to break the heart, and crush the spirit, of the noble-minded, though gentle Julia; and she beheld, with surprise and

 consternation,

consternation, the modest, timid, shrinking girl, who fled to her house as an asylum from tyranny at home—she whose predilection for Miss Somerville's society could only be surpassed by her delicate preference of her brother, gradually metamorphosed into the haughty and dashing woman of fashion, loud in her censure, severe in her sarcasm, and volatile in her pleasures.

All this time Amelia held a very different conduct with Horatio. If she had not been able entirely to reassure him with respect to the ominous apparition of Armine De Ross, she had at least contrived to give the affair such a turn that, strange as it may appear, it only served to confirm her influence over him. Amelia had the address to persuade him either that she was a gentle victim, and therefore the more deserving of pity, or that *his* superior merit had obtained a triumph over the earlier influence of Armine in her heart, or perhaps both. Be it as it may, the good-natured Horatio loved her with

a tenderness more solicitous than ever. His affection had lost a part of its earlier charm, but this was succeeded by a species of fascination more dangerous; he neither thought her so innocent, nor so amiable, as at first, but found her more interesting, when he believed she had been unhappy; his anxiety to anticipate her wishes increased—the inequalities and asperities of her temper (if ever they broke out in his presence) he attributed to her situation, and went beyond the extent of his fortune to gratify her capricious fancies.

That injudicious caution which always led him to conceal, even from his wife, the real state of his circumstances, often induced Mrs. Somerville to enter into plans of expence which she perhaps would have avoided, had she been better informed. Horatio had involved himself in debt at the period of his marriage, and his present way of living increased it. Partly to fly from the murmurs of a heart ill at ease,

and partly at the solicitations of her friends, Mrs. Somerville gave into a degree of dissipation which he was far from approving; but to remonstrate with Amelia was more disagreeable to Horatio than to see her thus employing herself, and "I cannot afford it," were words never admitted into his vocabulary.

In pursuance of this plan, Mrs. Somerville had gone one day to waste the morning at the bazaars, which were just then highly fashionable. The bazaar in Soho-square claimed the preference; and here Mrs. Somerville entered along with her sister-in-law, for Amelia could still, in public, lean upon the arm of the almost-heart-broken Julia, and insult her with those soft names, and softer smiles, which have no meaning when they cease to come from the heart. It was the fashionable hour—the bazaar was thronged with company. They were soon joined by lady Claremont; and Julia, labouring under the secret consciousness of Amelia's unkindness,

kindness, found a consolation in the animated greeting of that lady, whose predilection for her had completely confirmed Mrs. Somerville's laughing prophecy. Arm-in-arm they perambulated through the wonders of this motley scene, which borrowed all the aids of adventitious decoration to set off the tempting variety it displayed. Large looking-glasses, extending from the floor to the ceiling, multiplied, in every direction, the effect of the innumerable stands of jewellery, millinery, perfumery, toy, and fancy articles, sufficient to have set up the proprietors of a Dutch fair. At every standing lady Claremont had something to recommend or to buy; it was an artist she was patronizing—a milliner she protected—or a perfumer, of whom it was a charity to purchase some article, as the poor man had broken half-a-dozen times, though lady Claremont always took her rouge and pearl powder from him, and he was now trying the novelty of an exhibition at the bazaar.

Miss Somerville found it very difficult to resist the polite energy of her ladyship's various recommendations. Every moment lady Claremont gained upon her inclinations, though she was more calculated to captivate the fancy than the heart. She talked almost incessantly; but there was so much sweetness and so much frankness in her manner, that she pleased at once, as being natural and polished in the highest degree. Calling Julia's attention to some highly-finished paintings—"I shall order a dozen landscapes of that artist," she said, "to adorn my favourite summer sitting-room at Clairville; I like those specimens extremely. Julia, you must pay me a visit at Richmond, that we may get a little more acquainted; and I will try to make it more amusing to you than your last excursion there," continued her ladyship, smiling. "My dear Miss Somerville, are you not tempted with those beautiful caps? Allow me to recommend Mrs. Stanton to your notice—a very deserving

deserving woman," in a whisper, and has seen better days."

But lady Claremont did not confine herself to tempting Julia to spend money; if Miss Somerville had not restrained her new and lively friend, she would have pressed half her own purchases upon her acceptance, under the name of mere trifles, little *souvenirs*, &c.

Julia was in the midst of a polite dispute with her ladyship, who wanted to make her a present of a very elegant cross and chain, when their attention was diverted by overhearing a gentleman and some ladies, whom he was squiring, in a very lively altercation, of which they seemed to be the object.—" I allow," observed the gentleman, " 'tis a general maxim,

> ' Who praises Lesbia's eyes and feature,
> all her sister awkward

" But those ladies, I dare answer for it,

 don't

* Gay.

don't require it; and I maintain that, though lady Claremont is very lovely and very fascinating, Miss Somerville would be equally admired by any impartial judges."

"A compliment apiece for us!" said lady Claremont, laughing; "can you tell me," she added, in a whisper, "who the complimenter may be? By the loudness of his tones, and the air of the ladies who accompany him, I should vote them a group of country cousins."

Julia had thought there was something very peculiar in the tones and manner of the speaker, as united with the time and place, and was hardly surprised to discover it was her old acquaintance, Mr. Tom Birkit. The lady was Eliza Sanderson, who had been some time his wife, and who was accompanied by her mother and two sisters, neat as imported, from Rothbury, and all gaping at the wonders of the bazaar.

Amazed at the profusion of tempting articles

articles that solicited her attention, poor Eleanor Sanderson wished for every thing she saw, and, like the conqueror of the world,

> "Sighed and looked—sighed and looked—
> Sighed and looked—and sighed again;"

and wondered what *this* cost, and wondered what the other would fetch at Rothbury; and was, in short, so taken up with the objects displayed before her, that she did not recognise her old acquaintance. Not so Eliza Birkit—she stepped forward so quick, that Amelia had just time to retreat within a circle of fashionables, and make herself inaccessible; while Horatio, who was quite superior to that kind of folly, with his usual urbanity, inquired after the health of his country friends.

Pleased to reflect that she could not be now suspected of claiming their acquaintance upon interested motives, Mrs. Tom Birkit was voluble, in return for the polite and

and obliging reception she met from Horatio and Julia. The first piece of news she announced, in a whisper, was the death of her honoured father-in-law, which had happened a week after the departure of the Somervilles from Rothbury, and was, as his neighbours had always predicted, owing to a fall in a foxchase. This event might be termed a release, in more senses than one, and Mrs. Birkit did not scruple to call it so.—"But for that," she observed, "we should have been kept, our whole lives, at that odious poking Rothbury; but now Tom will not take things as he has done, and we shall see if he had not always some spirit."

During her residence at Rothbury, Miss Somerville had often observed that the inhabitants, though apparently pretty nearly upon a par, had each some reserve of self-conceit, which made them conceive themselves thrown away upon the place, and that they talked as if compelled to reside

there

there by some accident or misfortune, tho', in fact, born and bred in that vicinity.

Mrs. Birkit would probably have continued her intelligence, had not her attention been directed to a circumstance which she observed with no gentle feelings. This was no other than Amelia, who had refused to know her, welcoming, with her sweetest and most fascinating smiles, her sister, Mrs. Tornado, whose elopement with the young West Indian may be remembered, but who now, being assured of the approbation and forgiveness of her husband's father, fluttered, in the gay scenes of London, in all the splendour and triumph of the bride of a rich planter. Why Amelia made this distinction she had not yet confided to any one.

Eliza, having read that the best way to overlook a slight is to pretend to be engaged with a different object, abruptly seized her husband's arm, and, turning from the wrath-inspiring sight, exclaimed—" Look there, Tom; I'm sure

sure that is Mrs. Mapletoft; and I suppose those are the three Miss Mapletofts, of Fitzroy-square, her husband's nieces, whom she used to talk so often about. See if they haven't adopted our fashions to a T. And who can the young gentleman be that is with them? He wears his hat just like you. I must speak to them."

With her usual jolting jerk, Eliza bolted forward; but, oh ye swans of Mantua! give me a feather from your wings to paint the rest. Instead of an agreeable rencontre with her country neighbour, Eliza experienced a rude concussion, and was scarcely preserved from falling by her adoring husband, who caught her in his arms, covered with blood.

Dazzled and bewildered with the moving scene, and the succession of splendid objects the company and shops alike presented—unused also to the magical effect of the cloudless, unframed crystal, Mrs. Birkit had been seduced into the egregious

gious error of imagining that another family could, in elegance of adjustment, rival the Sandersons, and had, at a distance, mistaken the reflection of her mother's figure, and that of herself and sisters, in one of the large mirrors, for that of Mrs. and the Miss Mapletofts, advancing to meet them.

The blood that flowed from her forehead completely sobered her, when, in this moment of extreme distress, Compassion, in the shape it ought always to assume (that of a female), advanced to the luckless heroine's relief. An elderly lady, in a Scotch accent (which, however, Eliza thought the pleasantest she had ever heard), kindly condoled with her on her misfortune; and, taking from an ample pocket a silver case, apparently filled with balsamic medicaments, applied something to her forehead, which immediately alleviated the pain inflicted by this outrage on her beauty. This action might not announce the lady to be very fashionable; but

but it was very kind, which was, at this juncture, much more to the purpose.

While the stranger was still employed in the office of consolation, Mr. Somerville came up; and Eliza, from a latent remain of coquetry (Coquetry, thou fiend! as natural to the country belle as the courtly fair), made the most of her accident to Horatio, and was loud in the praises of the "divine lady," as she modestly termed her, who had come, like a guardian angel, to her assistance.—"What! my old friend, Mrs. MacCulloch!" exclaimed Horatio, advancing, with an irrepressible feeling of pleasure, "always doing good!"

"Aye, troth, lad!" returned the *lady*; "and rewarded by a sight of your sweet face! Would it not hae been an unco thing an I had returned to mine own people, and not seen my boy, Horatio Somerville? But come, introduce me to your bonny bride."

Horatio, who had more obligations to this Transalpine old-lady than the reader knows

knows of, desired nothing better, but feared some opposition on the part of his dovelike Amelia. Seeing Mrs. Somerville approach—"Amelia, my love," he said, "I long to introduce you to an old friend of my mother's, Mrs. MacCulloch. I am sure, as you leave town so soon, Mrs. Somerville will be happy in the pleasure of your company to dinner."

Amelia put on one of those conventional smiles which, to all but those who knew her, appeared as sweet as her real ones, and muttered something in confirmation of her husband's invitation. All the mighty rage of lady Lulworth and Miss Ravenshawe swelled in her secret soul at this compulsion, and she mentally exclaimed —"I have only escaped one horde of barbarians to fall in with another." However, as it was her principle never to let these tempers appear to Horatio, she complied with a good grace; and the handing Mrs. MacCulloch into his carriage terminated,

nated, much to Somerville's satisfaction, the adventures of the bazaar.

CHAPTER VI.

> Helas! cet avenir inconnu, qui nous cache tant de peines, nous empêche aussi de savoir que tel chagrin, dont la seule pensée nous effraie, n'est cependant pas celui dont nous devons souffrir.
>
> MADAME DE SOUZA.

BEFORE Mrs. Somerville came down to the drawing-room, where she had left Mrs. MacCulloch, in order to make some trifling alteration in her dress, Horatio followed his pretty wife to tutor her a little for the day.

"Indeed, my dove!" he began, "you must be civil to Mrs. Mac Culloch."

"Certainly, my love! She seems a queer old soul—pray, who and what may she be?"

"An

"An old and tried friend of my mother's, Amelia." (Horatio never could help *embroidering* a little—the worthy gentlewoman had once been the late Mrs. Somerville's housekeeper.) "Though not born in an elevated station in life," Somerville continued, "Mrs. MacCulloch has a spirit that would do honour to the highest. She was as fortunate in marriage as she deserved to be, which is saying every thing, and, in becoming the wife of a rich man, seemed only to have recovered the proper sphere for a mind so enlarged and generous to move in. Her conduct to Julia and myself, on *one* most trying occasion, was such as, I trust, I never shall forget. I allude to that fatal event in my family, which, though it may seem forgotten, is seldom absent from my memory—a recollection, the horror of which even thy love, Amelia, can hardly charm away."

Much agitated by the subject, Horatio was hastily quitting the room, when, unwilling to let his wife meet the benevo-

lent

lent stranger with a gloomy impression, he turned back, and added—"You will find Mrs. Mac'Culloch, after the plainness of her first address is over, possessed of all that lively good sense and shrewd humour peculiar to her country. I am much mistaken if she does not amuse you. Poor Jeanie MacCulloch! many has been the dispute, begun in awful severity, but terminated with playful gaiety, which I have had with her when an unlucky boy. I was something of a Pickle, and she, a rigid Presbyterian, and most attentive, as her countrywomen usually are to the duties of religion, used frequently to reprove the graceless habit I had, at but too early an age, taken up, of gazing, when at church, on such angels as you, Amelia, instead of fixing my thoughts upon objects really divine. One day, a little out of humour with her sermon, I bluntly retorted—'I have seen you do worse, mother, at meeting. Which is the greatest scandal, I beg to know, turning one's eyes on a pretty girl

girl for a moment, or closing them, in a comfortable nap, during the greater part of the service?'—'It may hae been sae,' she replied, devoutly casting up her eyes; 'the deil's aye on the watch to tempt us, puir, sinful souls, even in the very house of the Lord!'—'But how comes it, Mrs. MacCulloch,' I insisted, 'that he never tempts me so? You see I don't sleep. Why does not the de'il lay the same snare for me, I say?'—'Why does he nae tempt ye?' she replied, fixing her keen, though benevolent eye on me. 'Why! Guid troth! because he is *sure* o' ye, laddie!'"

But neither Horatio's affecting retrospections, nor his lively anecdote, could awaken, in his lady's bosom, the least inclination towards Mrs. MacCulloch, and the day would have passed off but heavily for her, if it had not been for the grateful and sedulous attentions of Somerville and Julia. With all her good-nature, poor Mrs. MacCulloch was, as most elderly persons have been for these few thousand years,

years, alarmed and astonished at the extreme degeneracy of the times. After dinner, the conversation happened to turn upon a lady of distinction, who, though cited as having received an uncommonly-careful education, yet signalized herself, as a married woman, by every fashionable folly.—"Ah!" said Mrs. MacCulloch, with a sigh, "who would hae thought it at the time there was sic a rout made about Miss Piercy, an' her discretion, an' her modesty, an' a' her good qualities!' It is sic women as lady ——— that mind one o' the auld Scots proverb—'Sae mony gude girls, whence the de'il aw the bad wives?"

Whether this aphorism suggested to Julia some correspondent train of ideas, or whether the circumstance was purely accidental, cannot be known; but certain it is, Miss Somerville, who now rarely or ever smiled, was irresistibly amused with this sally, and, seized with that species of convulsive merriment to which the miser-

able

able are at times subject, laughed unrestrainedly.

Amelia changed colour, but had sufficient command over herself to join in the laugh, and afterwards to converse for a few moments with more than her former vivacity. She however soon rose from table, and Horatio, to whom none of her movements were indifferent, remarked that she did so earlier than usual.

Prompted by an inquietude which every moment increased, he followed her, and found her in the dressing-room, in a fit of hysteric passion, which Julia was vainly endeavouring to appease.—"Leave me, Miss Somerville," she said; "your attentions are painful to me.

With the anxiety of the truest affection, Horatio eagerly demanded the cause of her disorder.—"Your sister insults me," sobbed Amelia, "and avails herself of that vulgar old creature's coarse jest to level the most cruel sarcasms at me."

"Insult you, Amelia!" Julia exclaimed,

 —"Oh,

—"Oh, Horatio! you who have known me best and longest, speak: do you think me capable of such mean—such dastardly revenge?"

"Who talks of revenge?" cried Somerville, half-distracted between the contending claims of his wife and sister—"Dear, enchanting, perplexing creatures! must I pay such a price for the happy hours I owe you?" He then endeavoured to assume a gayer tone; and availing himself of his influence with each, united the hands of Julia and Amelia. "Let me not be forced," he cried, "to say, like the *grand monarque*, that it is easier to give peace to Europe than to make two women agree in one house!"

With a kind of forced submission from Julia, and some further soothings of her husband's, Mrs. Somerville was at length so far pacified as to be induced to make her reappearance, and endure the unwelcome stranger for an hour or two longer; but from that unlucky day, her hatred of

Julia

Julia took a darker shade, and the application she had chosen to make of a harmless sally rankled in a mind which previous causes had rendered sorely irritable.

The next subject that came under review was their acquaintances from Rothbury. Amelia announced her intention of calling on Mrs. Tornado; and as Mrs. Tornado and Mrs. Birkit were sisters, Julia and Horatio were both of opinion, that if she called on the one, she owed the same attention to the other. But on this head Amelia totally differed from them. She had taken up an idea, whether innate or acquired, it matters not, that there was a considerable difference in their relative situations.

A country-gentlewoman, like Eliza, totally unknown in a vast metropolis, was, she argued, a person of no sort of consequence; but the gaiety and magnificence of the West Indians was always a ticket to fashion. She heard that Mrs. Tornado played high, observed that she dressed well,

and was very much pleased with what she had seen of her appointments. In short, Mrs. Tornado she would visit, and Mrs. Birkit she would not.

Jane Sanderson, who had quite given up her slender pretensions to the *bel esprit* with her maiden name, and was transformed, by the " magic of wealth," into a very fine lady, was extremely glad to add the name of Mrs. Somerville to her visiting list.

She received her with the most smiling cordiality, and the inclinations to friendly intercourse between the ladies being mutual, there was no want of topics for discussion during the whole of her visit. Mrs. Tornado expressed herself very happy in her new situation, and delighted with her husband's family, which consisted of two half-sisters, West Indians like himself, but who had been sent, many years before, to England for education, and were now arrived at that important and tremendous era for young ladies,

termed

termed coming-out. Amelia politely lamented that they were not at home, and, throwing down a card, expressed a wish to cultivate the young ladies acquaintance.

Jane assured her she would not be disappointed in the estimate she might form of their merit.—"They were the dearest, sweetest - tempered - creatures," she said, "she had ever met with. Then so accomplished! Theodora, a pupil of Kramer's, was one of the finest performers in London, and Mariamne was equally distinguished as a paintress, and for her elegant embroidery."

Mrs. Tornado proceeded to regret a pre-engagement which would prevent her accompanying her sisters-in-law to the play, on a night they were particularly desirous to go. They were very anxious to see "The Antiquary," and she wished to give them the gratification; but being girls of large fortune, there were very few people in whom she had sufficient confidence to

wish that they should appear in public with.

On hearing the words, "girls of large fortune," Amelia, with an air of the most fascinating graciousness, said, that if the Miss Tornados would wave ceremony, and consider this as a visit, she should be happy to chaperon them on the evening they mentioned.

Mrs. Tornado accepted the proposal with eagerness; again assured Amelia that Theodora and Mariamne Tornado were dear creatures, and would wave ceremony; and added, at parting, that she would make them call on her either on the day of the performance, or before it.

"I think," said Somerville, "you might as well have shewn a little attention to poor Eliza, as to those girls, who probably have plenty of friends, and whom you know nothing about. How often has Eliza Sanderson made one of your aunt's parties at Rothbury! and here, poor thing! she is so much a stran-

a stranger, that, I doubt not, she may find it almost as difficult to get out as if she were an unmarried woman."

The good-natured Horatio could hardly have urged a worse argument to interest his Amelia. Besides her objection to being seen in public with a person so utterly unknown to fame as Mrs. Birkit, she had a dislike to her, which she would hardly own to herself, as having once been an object of attention to Horatio; for Amelia, though she certainly was far from loving him to the degree she professed to do, had that symptom of the passion, excessive jealousy.

"Do as you please, my dear," Somerville resumed; "but I cannot help thinking you are precipitate."

"Why, what possible objection can there be to them?" asked Amelia, pettishly.

"None that I know of," replied Somerville; "but time will shew."

The Miss Tornados did not call to re-

turn Amelia's *informal* visit till the morning of the day Mrs. Somerville was to take them to the play. At the sight of their elegant equipage, Mrs. Somerville's heart triumphed in her superior penetration; for the Birkits had a carriage indeed, and one very fit to drag them through brambles and briars, along nine miles of miry road in the country, but no more to be compared to the varnished pannels of Mr. Tornado, than a seventy-four gun to an invalid steam-packet. The dress of the two young ladies was suited to their equipage, and in the highest style of expence and fashion; their air and manner corresponded with both. But when Mrs. Somerville came to survey the persons of her beautiful coheiresses, she shrunk aghast with astonishment and dismay; for the faces that peeped from beneath very elegant white satin hats and white ostrich feathers were black!

Mrs. Tornado had made no compact relative to the colour of her amiable sisters; and

and Amelia, in her haste to form the acquaintance, had omitted to notice the little word *half*, used in naming Mr. Tornado as their brother; for the mother of the young ladies was a native of Africa.

Had Julia been capable of a particle of the malice Amelia ascribed to her, she would now have had a complete triumph, in the discomfiture of her sister-in-law's worldly-minded policy; but, on the contrary, she exerted herself to make the visit pass off less dreadfully, and to conceal Amelia's dismay from the fair objects of it. This was the more easily managed, as the ladies had too high a conceit of themselves to ascribe any thing in Mrs. Somerville's manner to the real cause. They laughed, admired themselves, and chatted with unceasing volubility; and at length took leave, with an often-repeated promise to be with her in very good time in the evening.

Now was the moment that Amelia's fortitude entirely forsook her. On Julia's

 bosom

bosom she shed a torrent of tears; and clinging, in her distress, to the being she had almost spurned before—"No, never," she exclaimed, "will I submit to the horror of being seen in public with those creatures on each side for supporters! If you knew, my dear Miss Somerville, my antipathy—my horror of blacks——"

"But they are not quite blacks, dear Mrs. Somerville."

"The next thing to it. That eldest one, Mariamne—did you look at the shape and size of her great hand?"

"I was admiring the beautiful whiteness of yours within it, as she took it at parting, with the eagerness of a sudden fancy."

"Fancy! I'll tell you what, Miss Somerville, if you can't devise some means to get me off this odious party, I shall never survive it;" and again she had recourse to her smelling-bottle.

Julia knew not what to say. It was in vain to talk reason to Amelia, and tell her

she

she ought to have imagined some excuse while the young ladies were with her. When Horatio was told of her distress, he, less forbearing (perhaps only because conscious he loved her far better than Julia did), rallied her apprehensions, and remarked—"This was worse even than appearing in public with a country cousin."

In fruitless altercations, in sighs and tears, on the part of Amelia, the time was spent till the hour arrived for departure. The Miss Tornados were but too punctual. Glittering in robes and turbans of gold and silver muslin, they glided into the room. The fiery eye of Mariamne flashed with pleasure as she took a survey of her person in the ample pier-glass; but she could not help noticing the alteration in Mrs. Somerville, to whom she had taken, as Julia observed, a violent fancy.

The carriage drew up. Determined to make a heroic effort, Amelia led the way, secretly resolving to keep, as much as possible, out of view of her acquaintance, and

to return home early. The Miss Tornados were actually in the carriage, and Mrs. Somerville had her foot upon the step, when her arm was arrested by her husband, who whispered, in a hurried manner—"You cannot go abroad this evening—an express has arrived at lord Lulworth's—here is a letter for you—but do not be alarmed, my Amelia."

Mrs. Somerville took the letter intended for her, and, after glancing over the first lines with consternation, announced that there could be no going to the play that night. Seeing the family in some confusion, the disappointed misses returned home. The intelligence the letter conveyed was indeed such as to cause a total revolution in Mrs. Somerville's feelings, and completely to justify the motto we have chosen for the beginning of our chapter.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

> Non bramo altro, che morte: altra vaghezza
> Non ho che del mio fine.
> Un funesto desío d'uscir di vita
> Tutto m'ingombra, e par che mi conforte.
>
> GUARINI

THE letter was from Lascelles, and announced the death of his wife. It appeared he had followed her to Italy, rescued his child from her, and received her last breath. He was now returned to England, and lost no time in apprising the Lulworth family of an event which concerned them so nearly. Owing to the coolness between him and the family, his communications were, of necessity, short and constrained. Something he said about his being the only person able to give an account of the last moments of the unfor-

tunate

tunate Anna; and, brief as was the tenor of his letter, it was evident something very shocking and tragical preceded the catastrophe. The ladies were on the tiptoe of curiosity.

A few days afterwards a packet arrived for Horatio. It contained an ample account of his friend's wanderings, with a request that he would communicate what he thought proper to Mrs. and Miss Somerville. Having discovered that Anna was accompanied by lord Oglethorpe, when, with Celestina, she left the neighbourhood of the Lodge, Lascelles continued to trace their route, sometimes with good, sometimes with ill success, till, at length, he learned they had embarked with his treasure for Italy. He did not hesitate an instant to follow them; and having tracked them as far as Rome, found, on the day of his arrival there, that a lady and gentleman and child, answering their description, had set off that morning for Naples. Not baffled by this disappointment,

ment, Lascelles renewed his pursuit, but had not got much farther than Terracina, the neighbourhood of which was much infested by banditti, when the sight of an English equipage, surrounded by three or four men, with evidently-hostile intentions, attracted him to the spot. Before he could reach it, several shots were fired, and an English groom, riding up to the postilion, begged the strangers, for God's sake, to hasten to their assistance; for that his lord was killed, and his lady and her child dying. Lascelles, instantly alighting, led the way, followed by a servant, who was well armed and mounted. The ruffians, having plundered every thing of value, at sight of the strangers made off.

Prompted by humanity, Lascelles approached the gentleman, who yet breathed, but had received a mortal wound in the chest. The dying man collected his remaining strength, to beg of him to attend to the lady that was with him; but, as his wandering gaze rolled vacantly around, his

his eyes suddenly encountered those of Lascelles, when, with a deep groan, he closed them again. The sufferer was lord Oglethorpe.

Prepared by this dreadful discovery for what was to follow, Lascelles turned towards the fainting female; but what was his horror on beholding his child, his long-lost Celestina, firmly clasped to the bosom of the guilty Anna, and covered with blood! Thus to find her, only to lose her again with greater certainty, was an anguish for which he was not prepared. He approached the mother and child, but, on nearer examination, found the little innocent was unhurt, and that the blood proceeded from a wound received by the unhappy mother. Such a sight could not fail of producing its effect upon a heart like that of Lascelles. At that moment he saw in Anna only the parent of his Celestina—the woman who had once seemed blessed with him. He tried to speak some words of comfort to her; but the agony of conflicting

ing emotions was too great, and the intended pardon was lost in bursting sighs, that seemed to wring rather than relieve his tortured bosom.—The exigence of the moment demanding a prompt resolution, he had the miserable sufferers conveyed for succour to the nearest village; but however gentle the motion of the carriage, it was too much for the exhausted frame of lord Oglethorpe: he died a few minutes after they arrived at the farm where they had requested shelter; nor did it appear, from the moment of his most painful recognition, that he had an interval of consciousness.—The effect of the removal was different upon Anna. Though her bodily sufferings were exquisite, her senses returned.—"Oh, Lascelles, I have not deserved this of you!" were the first words she uttered, on seeing him assiduously watching by her bed. To this a frenzy fever, increased by her remorse, succeeded; and though the wound she had received was pronounced

pronounced but slight, the violence of this malady soon precluded all hope of recovery.

For three weeks Lascelles remained by the agonized penitent, who, in the alternations of reason and delirium, only experienced a variety of wretchedness. Alive to her awful situation alone, it was now that her injured husband appeared as her spiritual consoler; and while he watched every turn of her bodily complaint with active solicitude, he seized every interval of reason to infuse consolation into her mind. He spoke to her of the infinite mercies of her Creator; he assured her that penitence so deep as hers would be accepted; and, while he held in his arms the little Celestina, repeated the forgiveness he had granted on the recovery of his treasure.

"Oh, fool and blind that I have been!" murmured the miserable Anna—"blind to such worth—such excellence! And now to owe all to thee—to see thee stoop to such

such a wretch as I am—an angel's pity in an angel's form!—and I could leave thee!" She would then relapse into the agonies of frenzy, and, after maintaining the ineffectual struggle till nature was exhausted, expired, calling a blessing upon her husband's and her daughter's head.

In the intervals of her disorder, Anna informed her husband of the motives that guided her, and the means she had used to carry off Celestina. These he promised to communicate, at some future period, to Horatio. The mind of Lascelles appeared to have received a severe shock, and to remain under a cruel depression, from this abrupt termination of a connexion which had been productive of little but misery to him.

Little as the Lulworths had really loved or regarded the luckless Anna, yet, after upholding her through life as an angel, they owed it to their own consistency to mourn her in death as a saint; and the interruption this necessity produced in Mrs. Somerville's

Somerville's usual amusements rendered her temper more unequal than ever. As she was constantly complaining of Julia, and Julia never recriminated, the easy-tempered Horatio at length concluded that she who always complained must, in reality, be the aggrieved person. He made no further attempts to reconcile his wife and sister, but proved to the latter, by the negligence of his manners, more than the most cutting words could do it, that his opinion of her character was greatly altered.—After a shamefully-short seclusion, Mrs. Somerville, who could not endure retirement, again made her appearance in the gay world; but this made no difference in the feelings of Julia. Gradually deprived of every thing that makes life valuable, this amiable and warm-hearted being, who was formed to diffuse happiness over the most extensive circle, might literally be said to drag on a kind of living death. Amusement was become painful to her sick heart and drooping spirits. In the

the solitude of her own chamber, by her now-neglected fire, it was become Julia's highest enjoyment to sit for hours, in mournful contemplation of the present, as contrasted with the past, while retrospection was aided by the portraits with which her room was hung—portraits of cherished relatives, now mouldering in the dust. Fixing her eyes on the features of her sisters—features of which the painter had in vain tried to embody the fleeting loveliness—"Oh, why am I not with you?" she passionately exclaimed; "why are not the years yet in store for me transferred to some one to whom life is valuable? Though young, I have tasted of nothing but its bitterness. Few and evil have been my days; and even now I am ready—oh, how ready, to resign them!"

From these thoughts Julia was roused by a summons to accompany Mrs. Somerville to the Park. Already indisposed for the task of the toilet, she thought that, this day, she looked remarkably ill. While gazing

gazing on her own wasted features in the glass, it struck her that she bore a strong resemblance to the youngest of her sisters, just before the last fatal illness that hurried her to the grave. A beam of joy shot downward to her heart—"Is it possible?" she convulsively exclaimed. "Oh, my dear sister, I wronged you when I said that, from the summit of heavenly happiness, you were unmindful of my afflictions! In a year—six months—perhaps three, I shall rejoin you—rejoin you and my parents, in the abodes of everlasting bliss, and escape from this cold world, where none will give a tear to my memory."

Such meditations were not likely to make Julia an agreeable companion to a woman of Mrs. Somerville's disposition; yet, that morning, she was certainly uncommonly cheerful. Believing herself attacked with the same complaint as her sisters, Miss Somerville had almost reasoned herself into a persuasion that her days were

were numbered. The idea that she should soon escape from the evils of life rendered them already more supportable, and gave, even to her manner to Amelia, a languid air of tenderness, rather than reproach.

The promenade was uncommonly brilliant. Mrs. and Miss Somerville had scarcely taken two turns, when Amelia perceived the earl of Rothbury, with whom she was acquainted, arm-in-arm with a young man whom she was not long in recognising. It was Lascelles, who was obliged, by some business, to spend a short time in town. Notwithstanding the strong prejudices of the Lulworth family, the vileness of Anna's conduct, and the magnanimity of Lascelles, had at length been put in so clear a light, that Amelia was ashamed to persist in her injustice. Somerville had already advanced to meet him, with the cordial warmth of unabated friendship, and Mrs. Somerville received him with that grace which always distinguished her manner with those towards

whom

whom she had once made up her mind to behave properly. But what remained for Julia? Like the first beam of the sun, when it unchains the ice-bound streamlets, after a Lapland winter, was his cheering glance to her chilled and desolate heart. After the proper compliments were paid to Somerville and his wife, Lascelles immediately joined her; but it would be wronging both Adolphus and Julia to suppose that their words, or even their looks, spoke of love. Had he been free when she arrived at Rothbury, Julia would probably have been the object of his choice. They were drawn towards each other by an uncommon conformity of character, even to that gentle melancholy which each pensive bosom cherished as a dearer treasure than all that worldly gaiety could give. But the rigid principles of Lascelles commanded him to check the least approach to a warmer sentiment than the gratitude her candour excited; and Julia, on her part, had never dared to think of this unhappy

and

and interesting young man farther than to try to judge him justly. The recent death of Anna made each persist in this delicate reserve; but was it not enough for Julia, so long unaccustomed to meet a heart that answered to hers—was it not enough, to meet a being who took a lively interest in her concerns—who felt grateful for her past friendship, and eager to renew it?

How dangerous it is to accept a general invitation! That very morning Julia had invoked Death, and invoked him in the sincerity of her heart; and yet, now, had the grim gentleman taken her at her word, and presented himself between her and the blooming Adolphus, he would have run the risk of a worse than indifferent reception. Every object seemed to revive with Julia's reviving spirits. The greensward, which had appeared to her before a dusty disagreeable scene, now seemed adorned with all the beauties of spring. Pedestrians, equestrians, equipages, each had

 their

their charm; and she wondered at the sullen humour which prevented her having any pleasure in the Park before. London itself was no longer an interminable mass of uninteresting houses and streets, filled with insupportable people, hurrying to and fro about she knew not what—it was the element that encircled herself and Adolphus. Every day that he remained in town she saw him, and, in the course of conversation, he soon explained to her whatever yet remained unaccounted for in all that concerned himself and Celestina.

Julia found that, in the sufferings of the unhappy Anna, he had been amply avenged; and from her own lips Lascelles had received the confession of her motives and feelings. The slave of a jealous and suspicious tyrant (the more suspicious, from the cause she had given him to believe her destitute of principle), equally afraid to solicit the clemency of her husband, or to throw herself under the protection of her relations, whose severity she had already experienced,

experienced, the despair of Anna was at its height when lord Oglethorpe announced his intention of going abroad; and it was then that she conceived the idea of taking her little daughter, with her to alleviate her sufferings. As he was always hurrying her from place to place, she obtained his lordship's consent, on communicating her wishes to him, that they should remain for some time in retirement, and under assumed names, in the neighbourhood of her former home. She learned the intimacy of Lascelles with the family at the Lodge, and her object was to seize upon Celestina, on some occasion when she was removed from her father's protection; and at the same time there was no one at the Lodge who could effectually oppose a sudden and well-concerted plan. Long had she waited for this desired opportunity. Urged to her inquiries by a mother's powerful feelings, through her emissaries, she watched all the motions of Celestina, of Lascelles, of Horatio, and Julia.

 At

At length the conjuncture occurred which she deemed fitted for her purpose—the moment in which the unsuspecting innocent was left unprotected at the Lodge, with only Julia, as unsuspecting as herself. Sure of a repulse if she came announced in her proper character, and demanded her child, Mrs. Lascelles introduced herself to Miss Somerville in the manner formerly related, but came in her equipage (a plain yellow landau, without arms), determined, even had she not succeeded in her project of enticing the child, to create some other pretext for having her placed in it, and carrying her off.

Her intention was to bring up Celestina in Italy, where she flattered herself she might be kept in ignorance of those circumstances that must prevent her respecting her mother, as her tyrannical but enamoured protector meant to reside there with Anna, under the name they had assumed, and they were to pass for husband and wife. Mrs. Lascelles reserved to herself

herself the discretionary power of introducing Celestina to her own family, by the time she arrived at years of maturity.

On the success of her stratagem, the guilty pair quitted the neighbourhood, and proceeded, by a circuitous route, to a seaport; so that the distracted father found it very difficult to discover any trace of them; and it was more by good fortune than in consequence of the direction of his inquiries, that he learned they had embarked with his little daughter for Italy. The circumstances of his meeting there with Anna, of the services he rendered her, of her sufferings from the banditti, her subsequent illness, and death, Lascelles passed over more rapidly, not from any intentional reserve, but really from the unconquerable repugnance he felt to dwelling upon events and scenes so painful, and in which he had borne so conspicuous and meritorious a part. With Julia Adolphus had no concealments, and this confidence in her sympathy was the first-

fruits of that perfect love, which promised, if no accident divided them, to form, at some future period, the happiness of their lives. To make himself amends for his brevity on this topic, he was eloquent upon the satisfaction he enjoyed in the recovery of Cœlestina. She was now at Rothbury, he said, under the judicious care of her respectable *gouvernante*, and blooming with a degree of health and beauty which he had hardly dared to hope, after the varied and afflicting succession of events that had lately taken place. She had sent a thousand kind and tender messages to Miss Somerville, which shewed at how early an age gratitude may implant an affectionate recollection in an infant mind. Of her sensibility, indeed, Adolphus spoke in terms that shewed it to be surprisingly strong, and expressed his hope that he might be able so to guide and restrain it, that she might not retain, from the late occurrences, impressions too deep and terrible.

When

When Lascelles spoke of his future wishes with regard to Celestina, it always appeared as if he left something unexplained; but Julia believed that, where he was silent, she was able to interpret his thoughts. She could herself, without affectation, enter into the interest* with which he reverted to the objects connected with home; for, to Julia, the period she had spent at the Lodge always appeared invested by memory with a soft and purple light—a sweetness, and an impression of joy, that she had sought to renew in gayer scenes in vain.

Too soon the moment for the departure of Lascelles arrived. He was the bearer of a thousand affectionate messages from Julia, in return for those he had delivered from Celestina, and sought, with a heart comparatively lightened, the solitude of his secluded abode. Though propriety did not permit his immediately requesting to correspond with her, Julia was sure of hearing of his welfare through her brother;

 and

and the hope of happiness once more visited her young and ingenuous mind.

CHAPTER VIII.

> Some drops of comfort for the favour'd fall,
> But showers of sorrow are the lot of all. CRABBE.

> Pour s'établir dans le monde, on fait tout ce qu'on peut pour y paroître établie. LA ROCHEFOUCAULT.

THE health and serenity which beamed once again in the aspect of Julia imparted a degree of lustre to her beauty, which, since her return to the fashionable world, it had been far from possessing. The soft hope her bosom at length admitted, of becoming, one day, an object of exclusive tenderness to Adolphus, gradually reconciled her to the change she experienced in her brother and sister. As her feelings towards them grew more calm, she began to

to endure any little negligences on their part with greater temper and patience, and actually became more amiable in their eyes, from having learned to love them less. The secret source of soft happiness which had fixed its abode in her heart, diffused a life-charm over her countenance, which animated every feature. Now that her beauty had acquired maturity and expression, it was pronounced equal to that of the most celebrated of the Miss Somervilles: wherever she moved, she was admired and followed; and it might be said that the gentle flame Julia nourished in her breast, communicated its warmth to all who approached within its dangerous influence.

To these flattering circumstances were added sources of satisfaction of a domestic nature. It was so long since they had heard or seen any thing of captain De Ross, that she began to flatter herself the romantic gentleman was perhaps gone on an expedition to the North Pole.

His removal gave her sincere pleasure; for, after all the pains she had taken to moderate the excess of a sensibility no longer returned or understood, solicitude for the happiness, the prosperity and honour of her dear—still but too dear brother—was a leading principle in the mind of the affectionate and warm-hearted Julia. Made up herself of gratitude, of love, and tenderness alone, if she knew a feeling resembling ambition, it was for this only brother; and here too she was destined to receive full gratification. Somerville had distinguished himself in a most brilliant manner, in two or three causes of great consequence; every day his fame increased; and as Amelia was fated to be an expensive wife to him, Julia trusted that fame would not come unaccompanied by fortune.—This was yet to be seen.

The family were preparing to leave town, when, one morning, Julia, passing by her brother's library, chanced to hear the end of a conversation between him and Amelia.

Amelia. These conversations were now carried on with fewer expletive "loves" and "doves" than formerly.

"Impossible, Amelia! Upon my soul, I cannot think of it!" her brother was saying with vehemence. "No, no! sooner hang—drown—starve—return to Rothbury."

Upon this refusal she heard Amelia go out by the other door, shutting it after her with violence. Miss Somerville ventured to enter her brother's apartment.—"What proposal was Mrs. Somerville making, dear Horatio," she said, smiling, "that could lead you to such desperate extremities?"

"My dear Julia," returned Somerville, looking surprised, yet not displeased at her intrusion.—"It was——No, upon my soul, I cannot tell you what it was! These women are destined to be my plague and torment. Not one of them have the least idea of principle—no, not one. I except you, Julia; you always had the strictest

 principle,

principle, united to the most yielding sensibility."

Soothed and delighted beyond expression at this rare and unexpected tribute to her mild virtues, Julia besought her brother no longer to keep her a stranger to his affairs; and the harassed Horatio, who had, indeed, been long in want of a judicious and feeling friend, to whom he could unbosom himself, did not resist the advances of natural affection.—"Why, the truth is, Amelia has taken it into her head (and when Mrs. Somerville takes a thing in her head, it is impossible to get it out again, you know), that nothing will satisfy her but a house at Brighton for the season. It must be a large house too, sufficient to accommodate the precious family occasionally. I had already gone down, and looked at a very handsome and fashionable lodging, but she would not hear of it."

"Is that all, dear Horatio? If you have not the means of gratifying her, have you

not

not the management of my little fortune, and do you think I should hesitate to recommend your employing a part of it, which you can replace at your convenience, in meeting this or any other exigency? I do not wish to take credit with Mrs. Somerville for this; my aim, I own, is to contribute to the domestic comfort of my brother."

"Dear, liberal Julia! *that* was, I acknowledge, what Mrs. Somerville suggested; and I was so indignant at the idea, that I answered her with a warmth which I never permitted myself before—I hope she did not feel it too acutely," resumed Horatio, relapsing into tenderness and irresolution. "I would not vex her *now* for the world—I'll go to her."

"Do, and tell her the house shall be taken; it will prevent any danger from your former remonstrance, I promise you."

"No, Julia; it would be abusing your goodness—I feel it would."

"Let *me* decide upon that; and trust

me.

me, that no employment I could find for my money would be half so grateful to me, as that of proving my sincere attachment to my brother."

The house at Brighton was taken, and the Somerville family removed thither. The scene was changed; but the species of profusion which always reigned in Horatio's establishment was unaltered. His honourable and right honourable relations, all, in turn, lived upon him, and seemed to think they did him a favour in doing so. Mrs. Somerville's situation afforded an additional pretext for being always surrounded by her family.

About a month after their arrival at Brighton, Amelia presented her husband with a little girl, who promised to cement and increase the union subsisting between them. The affectionate heart of Julia prepared to love and welcome her brother's child; but, whether it originated in the mother's previous dissipation, or from some other cause, the poor little innocent, though

though apparently as fine a baby as ever blessed a parent's sight, only survived its birth a few days, and expired in convulsions, in the arms of its distracted mother.

This was a heavy blow to Somerville; but Amelia felt it still more acutely. The creature of enthusiasm and romance, she had promised herself, in the love with which her infant would inspire her, a compensation for all the agonies of her heart. Never accustomed to impose more than an outward check upon her passions, they raged now with the greater violence, as no one could deny but that their source was legitimate; and her distraction was so great, her husband feared for her reason.

The spirits of Julia were also affected by this event, and her only consolation was in the melancholy reflection, that, if her brother's mode of living continued the same, and his means did not increase, the poor little stranger was perhaps removed from a world of distress and difficulty to the mansions of eternal rest.

Violent

Violent griefs are generally the shortest. After a time, Mrs. Somerville could again take pleasure in the amusements of the world. Their party at Brighton was enlivened by the addition of the young earl of Rothbury. Julia viewed him with complacency, as a person who had been among the first to notice and reward the merit of Lascelles, and gave him a distinguished reception. But the earl could not flutter so near the candle, without, like the moth, singeing his wings. He soon became seriously captivated; yet, as a secret feeling told him Miss Somerville was the reverse of those young ladies who place their happiness in the rapidity and publicity of their conquests, he was averse to risk the present agreeable footing on which he was with her by a premature declaration. He therefore delayed it till he should, by his attentions, have secured an interest in her heart; while Julia, whose mind was too much occupied by another object to perceive the drift of his lordship's

lordship's assiduities, unconsciously encouraged his hopes by the sweetness of her temper and manners.

It was necessary however to return to London. The expences of Mrs. Somerville, during the ensuing winter, greatly exceeded the last; but lord Lulworth, who was now in high favour with the minister, was to obtain for Somerville an advantageous place, which could be held by a lawyer; and this was to remedy all. Still the place did not come; and before the end of the season, Horatio was several thousand pounds deeper in debt. The harassed state of his mind combined with a life of unintermitting business or dissipation to impair his health, that had always a tincture of his mother's delicacy, from which Julia alone, of the whole family, was entirely free. Still he was, to the world, the gay man of fashion and talent, distinguished alike in the more flowery and thorny walks of life; and still it was, as much as ever, his aim to *appear* more

more blessed in friends, in fortune, even in health, than he really was. Julia saw the truth, and again earnestly offered him her assistance. Rendered less delicate by increasing difficulties, Somerville was still more *persuadable* (as Richardson terms it) than before; and though he did not communicate to her the amount of what he took up, Julia had reason to think she had now assisted him to the extent of her power.

From the anxiety inspired by this object of her fond affection, her attention was once again called to a still-dearer interest, by the receipt of a letter from Lascelles, in which he, at length, unveiled the cherished sentiments of his heart, and acknowledged, that if *hers* responded to them sufficiently to enjoy the retirement which it was alone in his power to offer her, he should think all the sufferings of his past life fully compensated.

Ere Julia had time to reply to this most welcome letter, Lascelles himself was in town to receive her decision from her own

lips.

lips. Accustomed as she was to mortifications, Julia was not prepared for that which she received on this occasion from the Somervilles. Instead of the warm and friendly reception he had given him last year, Horatio's behaviour to Lascelles was cold, discouraging, and embarrassed. Amelia was still more stately and repulsive. She seemed to have resumed, for his especial benefit, some of the statue-like stillness which distinguished her manner at Rothbury; and whoever had gazed on her cold and unanimated countenance would scarcely have believed it was the beautiful woman, the dimpling play of whose features constituted one of her principal charms in the eyes of the few she condescended to favour.

Petrified by this conduct, Julia vainly sought to account for it. Though she did not immediately hit upon the real cause, yet too many probabilities presented themselves not to fill her with painful solicitude. The former relations of Lascelles with

with the Lulworth family, the awkwardness of seeking another woman in the presence of the sister of Anna—these, and a thousand other considerations, united to the unbending stiffness of her brother's manner, produced such a disagreeable impression on the spirits of the truly timid and modest Julia, that she too remained disconcerted and silent; and a cursory observer might have mistaken her embarrassment for indifference.

Adolphus was far from being *that* cursory observer; but on this occasion he was prejudiced by a tendency in his own character, which was the only fault his earnest efforts had never been able to eradicate. This was a certain loftiness and passive pride, that rose under oppression, that had increased with adversity, and was even indelibly impressed on the noble turn of his features, figure, and countenance.—"If I was mistaken in believing myself distinguished by her—if higher connexions, and higher views, have succeeded to the

the slight preference she may have formerly betrayed for me," he said, " she has but to make it known. It shall not be said, a second time, that I was the cause of removing any woman from the more distinguished sphere in which her friends wished to fix her."

Julia saw that Lascelles was deeply hurt, though she saw not *how* deeply; and the uneasiness this perception gave her added to the difficulty she felt in assuming cheerfulness. Thus the day to which she had long looked forward as the happiest of her life—the day that should reunite her to Adolphus, proved, like most of our expected pleasures, a complete blank disappointment. After he was gone, she bitterly reproached herself with not having summoned up courage to welcome him as he deserved. She spent the night in tears.

The next morning, unable to employ herself, she quitted the house, hoping the fresh air might calm the perturbation of her mind; and entering a pavilion in the garden,

garden, attempted to read, but was soon roused by the information that Lascelles was in the house, and had asked for her. The saloon into which he had been shewn communicated with the garden by folding doors of glass, and thither he followed her. Julia trusted this interview would clear up all. The traces of tears, of her bad night, of her extreme dejection, Lascelles accounted unfavourable auguries for the success of his love, and earnestly entreated her to say if any thing had altered her opinion of him.

Julia would have given worlds to reassure him, but had already suffered so much on his account, and her spirits were so depressed, from a variety of causes, that she could only reply to his inquiries by a fresh burst of tears.

"Why this silence—those tears?" said Lascelles to Julia: "am I a tyrant, to dictate to you; or a monitor, whom you fear? Perhaps I myself am the author of my misfortune—I may have been silent

too

too long. How could I expect you or your brother could form an intimate connexion with a De Ross, and long bestow on me those flattering, precious testimonies?"

His voice failed on recalling those happy days of friendship and innocence—days that he feared were gone for ever; and his pride subdued by a sweeter, stronger emotion, he besought her, by a word, to confirm or remove his apprehensions.

Julia wished to speak that word; but on Lascelles alluding to Horatio's coldness to him, it suddenly struck her that she had discovered the fatal reason of it. It was—it could be no other than the embarrassment of Somerville's affairs, which made him dread the marriage of Julia, as such a circumstance would involve the necessity of accounting for her fortune. But how communicate such a degrading secret to Lascelles? While she reflected on it, in prolonged silence, it occurred to her

her again, that it was doing both her brother and her lover injustice, to suppose, either, on the one hand, that any temporary embarrassments could induce Somerville to oppose her permanent happiness, or, on the other, that Lascelles was capable of ungenerously distressing him.—"No, Horatio!" she mentally exclaimed, "you are too good, too kind, not to avail yourself of the first opportunity to do me justice; and, in the meantime, you could not trust your distresses to a friend more noble-minded, more forbearing, than Lascelles."

Influenced by these latter reflections, Julia, with a blush, replied to Adolphus, by modestly referring him to her brother: and he, justly concluding this was the form she chose to give to her consent, for an instant indulged in the transports of gratified affection.—"I see him cross the walk," he said, speaking of Somerville; "I will not delay a moment learning what I may hope."

After this, Julia observed Lascelles and her brother, linked arm in arm, engaged in conversation, that did not appear to turn out so favourably as Adolphus expected to his wishes. The manner of Lascelles was ardent, eager, and agitated; that of Somerville cool, polite, and self-possessed. He seemed to be evading some question Adolphus was earnestly pressing on him, but evading it with a degree of gentlemanlike and well-bred gaiety. Julia would have given much to know what he was saying, and felt transfixed, by an agitating and painful curiosity, to the spot where Lascelles had quitted her. Soon the gentlemen separated. Again Lascelles rushed by the pavilion; but he would have passed on without turning to look at her, but for an exclamation that she could not restrain.

"Oh, Julia!" he then demanded, gazing on her with looks which painted all the anguish of his soul, "why—why was I not worthy, at least, to have been your

 friend?

friend? You might have had more confidence in me—I understand it all now; and may your choice be happy!"

Convinced that he spoke under the influence of some misapprehension, she entreated him to stay—to explain himself.

"No, Julia; think no more of me," he replied. "*He* whom you prefer well deserves your undivided heart. *Who* is better qualified to speak to his merits than——"

The effort to praise a rival was too much for the haughty, though generous spirit of Adolphus. He could not conclude it; but, pausing, from excess of emotion, took both her hands, and pressing them with energy to his bursting heart, exclaimed—"Once and again, adieu, thou promised treasure of my life! Adieu—adieu for ever!"

Confused, overwhelmed with this unexpected termination of her hopes, Julia remained bewildered in a maze of the most painful conjectures, and scarcely noticed the

the entrance of her brother into the pavilion. The sight of him, however, soon awakened in her mind an irresistible desire to know the extremity of her fate; and, no longer restrained by scruples which, in a calmer state of spirits, had such weight with her, she raised her eyes with a look of wild inquiry to meet Horatio's, and earnestly adjured him to tell her truly what it was he had said to Adolphus.

Somerville experienced, at this demand, a degree of confusion approaching to remorse. Hiding his embarrassment under a more gay and gallant air than usual, he repeated—"Said to him! I think, Julia, you ought rather to ask what Lascelles said to *me*. But, no—you are too well apprised already, I doubt not, when your charms have made a new slave. He said very handsome things, I assure you, and accounted, in the most satisfactory manner, for never having before hinted at his admiration of you. I told him, in return,

that such fair and honourable conduct demanded, and should be met, by an equal degree of candour on my part."

Julia directed towards her brother an inquiring and penetrating glance, which seemed to say—"What does all this tend to?"

"I therefore," resumed Horatio, with an unembarrassed brow, "apprised him of the simple truth."

Julia waited to hear what this "simple truth" was, with a *presentiment* of some dreadful misrepresentation.

"I frankly confessed," continued Somerville, "that his patron, the young earl of Rothbury, was desirous of wearing your chains; and on his asking if you gave him any encouragement, replied, that it was difficult to say *what* was termed encouragement by young ladies, but that you seemed to prefer his assiduities to those of any other visitor at the house."

All this, from the reasons formerly related, was, literally speaking, no more than the

the truth; yet Somerville had managed to convey in it a falsehood, that had poisoned the mind of Lascelles, and for ever destroyed the happiness of Julia. In the first emotion of indignation, she could not conceal her abhorrence of this disingenuous—this treacherous conduct; and her looks reproached her really well-meaning, but now worldly-minded brother, more eloquently than any words could have done.

"I could not do less," resumed Somerville, answering her silence. "Would you have had me conceal a conquest that half your sex are dying to win from you? No, Julia," he continued, attempting to soothe and flatter, "it would have been wronging your charms, my lovely girl. It is always better to be envied——"

"It is better to speak the truth, nor let any motive alter or disguise it!" exclaimed Julia, unable to keep silence any longer, on once more hearing an allusion to the maxim she detested. "Oh, Somerville!

 into

into what a labyrinth of guilt and error have you plunged me! how you have injured us both, by not comprehending such a character as Lascelles!"

Somerville comprehended the proud, jealous, and sensitive character of Adolphus but too well, and had artfully brought forward every suggestion and every motive, that, with his peculiar feelings, heightened and confirmed as they had been by the untoward circumstances of his life, could induce Lascelles to renounce his sister. Horatio saw that the time for feigned good-humour was over, and, addressing her in a more serious tone, continued—"Hear me, Julia. I am in difficulties, which your marriage with Lascelles would only increase, while I should have the additional mortification of not being able to do you that justice which is, every way, so much your due. How these difficulties have been incurred—how much your imprudent brother is to blame, is a question upon which we now need not

enter.

enter. Believe me, the remembrance of it haunts all my waking thoughts, and drives sleep from my pillow."

Julia was softened—she offered Somerville her hand; and Horatio, flattering himself she would adopt his ideas, continued—"To lord Rothbury your fortune is no consideration—a mere trifle, which, as my friend, he would apply for, or forbear, as he saw the state of my circumstances. No, dear girl! it is your virtues, your talents, your very uncommon beauty, that have irresistibly enthralled him. He has communicated his wishes to me, and I freely confess that, by complying with them, you would insure the happiness and peace of mind of a brother you once professed to love, while you rendered yourself the envy of the most accomplished of your sex."

Though he had thrown in the seasoning of a little romantic flattery, proper, as he supposed, to influence a young beauty like

 Julia,

Julia, Horatio spoke with an energy which had its rise in conviction; for he was seriously persuaded, that, when the recollection of this slight misunderstanding was over, his sister would feel grateful to him for his attention to her real interests. But neither flattery nor interest could root from her mind a passion so fixed, so pure, as Julia's. To all his arguments in favour of lord Rothbury, she could only reply—"Dear Horatio! why could you not have acted with real openness by Lascelles? You have formed a strange idea of him—oh, how different from the reality! Believe me, and I know him well, had you unbosomed yourself to him, not even from your poor Julia could you have met with more considerate friendship and pity than——"

"Pity!" repeated Horatio, in a terrifying voice, that formed the most shocking contrast with the gay, careless good-humour of his usual manner—"it is the sentiment

timent I, through life, have shunned, repelled, abhorred; and if ever I am reduced to live upon it, I know my remedy."

This last dreadful allusion to the fate of his father, Somerville pronounced in a hurried manner, and a tone suppressed from convulsive agony. Shuddering to see how the perseverance in one apparently-venial fault can gradually pervert a good mind, and render it inaccessible to every moral and religious sentiment, Julia, who had just now imagined herself arrived at the extremity of misery, caught a glimpse of misfortunes even more terrible to contemplate. Apprehension for her brother succeeded to sympathy with her lover's sufferings, and she felt equally unwilling to reduce Somerville to despair, or to temporise with lord Rothbury.

CHAPTER IX.

> Oh, wretched is the dame to whom the sound,
> "Your Lord will soon return," no pleasure brings!
>
> MATURIN

WHEN Amelia first perceived lord Rothbury's admiration of Julia at Brighton, she had held a short counsel with her secret soul, whether her own vanity would be most mortified by her sister-in-law's taking precedence of her, or gratified by the family in which she had married contracting a splendid alliance. As she was not deficient in worldly sense, when she chose to make use of it, the latter consideration gained the ascendancy; and when she was informed of the earl's proposals, as mentioned in the last chapter, she became his most strenuous advocate. Scarcely listening to her interested representations,

tions, Julia was solely intent on learning what had become of Lascelles. To her infinite mortification, she discovered he had left town on the very day their last interview took place; and the only hope she now clung to was, that if the unhappiness of Adolphus equalled her own, he could not be long without seeking some intercourse by letter.

While Amelia pleaded for lord Rothbury, Horatio, for once, found his reason and inclination in accordance when he declared her to be perfectly right. He was indeed exactly of the same opinion in this point as his wife. Still sincerely attached, at the bottom of his heart, to his sister, she only wanted, in his eyes, to be perfect, to be possessed of a little more ambition; for ambition was become Horatio's idol, since he had been disappointed in the flattering picture he had drawn to himself of the sterling virtues of Amelia, though he was still infatuated by her assumed fondness and real beauty. This beauty Amelia

was in danger, in a great degree, of losing. Late hours and dissipation, united to anxiety of mind, had visibly impaired it; and she was fast sinking, from the agreeable consequence annexed to superior charms, to the melancholy dignity accompanying delicacy of helath. To the world, still an interesting and elegant invalid, she was, in her family, more than ever fretful, capricious, and exacting; and this conduct, which would have alienated a less tender husband, only attached the good-natured Horatio more fondly to her than ever. Of all her family, lady Claremont was the only one who made light of Mrs. Somerville's indispositions. Knowing how much the heart entered into all the maladies of Amelia, she insisted that a succession of cheerful and agreeable pursuits would be their most certain cure.

This lady, who, as we have already seen, soon resumed her naturally-joyous disposition, was now one of the gayest of the gay, and spared neither exhortation nor example

example to induce her sister to persevere in imitating her. One morning the lively widow had called for the express purpose of luring Amelia from her couch, and inducing her to accompany her to the play. One of the entertainments was "Aladdin," and lady Claremont was eloquent upon the brilliancy of the *spectacle.*

Finding her arguments fruitless, for Amelia declared the bare idea of such an undertaking gave her a fit of the horrors —"I see how it is," said lady Claremont, with arch emphasis—"You are afraid of the African magician."

"Not in the least," answered Amelia, in the same tone, "now I have the powerful protection of the magic ring." She held up the wedding finger of her white, though slender hand, as she pronounced these words, and smiled

Julia remembered captain De Ross's expedition into Africa, and could not mistake the tendency of this allusion. Displeased with the levity of this *badinage*

between

between the sisters, she looked, fixedly, first at Mrs. Somerville, then at lady Claremont.

Amelia caught her eye—"No," she continued, with increasing spirit, "I am safer from the African magician than some ladies are from a certain Pastor Fido, for whose sake they did not over-scrupulously regard the virtue of the magic ring itself." Lady Claremont but partially comprehended the meaning of this obliging speech, the whole venom of which was designed for the offending Julia.

Amelia had frequently availed herself, among other arms, of a pretended suspicion that Lascelles and Julia had confessed a mutual attachment to each other previous to the death of the deserving Anna; and when Julia indignantly repelled the accusation, always laughed and apologized; but it was in the manner of those who are "convinced against their will." Cruelly hurt at the publicity of this sarcasm, Julia left the ladies to finish their conver-

sation

sation without any further animadversion on her part. Unable to succeed with her sister, lady Claremont soon afterwards took leave; and Amelia, observing, as she regularly did after a visit of her ladyship's, that her spirits were unequal to keep up with her entertaining Charlotte's, retired to her dressing-room, to recover the fatigues of the day.

Somerville was engaged to a public dinner—a circumstance he lamented with unaffected tenderness, when he observed his dear Amelia more than usually overcome; and recommending her to Julia's particular care, he, with repeated fond farewells, left the ladies together.

At the hour when Miss Somerville expected to share her repast with Amelia, Mrs. Somerville's own woman came down with "her lady's compliments; and as she felt so very unwell, she would not leave her dressing-room any more that day, but begged Miss Somerville would have dinner

ner just as usual, and not disturb herself to go to her."

Such were the disagreeable terms on which Julia had long lived with Amelia, that she knew not whether to interpret this polite message into an attention or a sneer. Determined, however, to take every thing in the best point of view, she, without further comment, sent up to Mrs. Somerville any thing she chose to have, and took her own meal in solitude and silence.

As may be well supposed, it was not long; and as soon as the cloth was removed, Julia, drawing her chair towards the fire, began meditating on the surprise and disappointment she had experienced as this extraordinary character had gradually developed itself.

But Julia's was one of those gentle minds which can scarcely meditate long on any character without feeling moved to interest, and then to indulgence. Recollecting

lecting her brother's parting charge, "am I not in fault?" she asked herself. "Blameable as Amelia's conduct has been to me, she is certainly depressed in spirits and in languid health. She surely would be cheered by my presence; and shall I, adhering to the letter of a message, perhaps not correctly delivered, keep aloof in sullen reserve, leaving her deprived of my brother's soothing attentions—given up to mercenary attendants — suffering — spiritless—solitary!"

Affected to a painful degree by the picture she herself had drawn, the acuteness of Julia's feelings would not admit of any delay in her benevolent intentions; and running up the dressing-room stairs, without waiting to have herself announced, she just gave a gentle tap at the door, and at the same moment opened it. Miss Somerville found her sister-in-law, who had just dined, looking a little better, and also better dressed than she was in the morning. Opposite to her, apparently engaged

gaged in earnest conversation, sat captain De Ross.

"This is too kind of you, my dear sister," said Amelia, without the least embarrassment; "I think I mentioned being so ill, I could see none *but my own family.*"

At this apostrophe Julia felt a strong inclination to laugh; but, recollecting the ill luck of her last solitary fit of laughter, she restrained herself.

"I did not mean to include you—you animal!" continued Amelia, directing a look of obliging reproach towards De Ross. "But the fact is," turning again to Miss Somerville, "when my cousin Armine, who was to have accompanied us to the play, learnt from Charlotte that my ill health did not allow me to go out, he could not resolve to leave London without personally inquiring after me.—He leaves town to-night."

Captain De Ross added a few words in confirmation of this statement, to which the

the astonished Julia had nothing to reply. He then, with graceful ease, claimed the renewal of his former slight acquaintance with Miss Somerville; and Julia, notwithstanding her strong preventions, felt irresistibly interested and pleased with his address.

After a little more general discourse, captain De Ross continued the former topic of conversation—some of his marvellous adventures in the deserts. Resuming the attitude in which he had sat when addressing Amelia (one arm resting on the table—his hand passed across his forehead, so as slightly to screen his eyes), captain De Ross concluded a narrative, which equally captivated the attention of both his hearers, by the mixture of intelligence and romantic daring it displayed.

Captain De Ross had not only seen a great deal of different parts of the world, but also read every thing that had been written on the subjects of his curiosity, which gave variety and richness to his ideas.

ideas. The same ardour with which he had once loved Amelia inspirited him to these perilous researches; and a sort of restless enthusiasm, fire, and sensibility, penetrated through every thing he uttered, and produced the greater effect, because it was evidently the real disposition of the man, and evident too that he repressed much more than he betrayed.

Julia felt vexed and angry with him for his uncommon powers of pleasing; for a secret whisper told her, if Armine could win even her over to his party, his influence must ever remain great, with a mind habituated, from childhood, to admire him.

Captain De Ross took leave early, and for some moments the sisters remained looking in silence at each other.

Amelia was the first to speak—"Doubtless you think this a strange scene, Miss Somerville," she said, "and will endeavour to interpret it to my disadvantage."

"So far from wishing to interpret it to your disadvantage," answered Julia, mild-

ly,

ly, "I will not even mention this accidental occurrence to my brother, if I can depend on you, Mrs. Somerville, that captain De Ross is in reality leaving our neighbourhood."

Amelia's proud eye flashed fire.—" 'Tis very well," she replied; "the doubt does me honour—I acknowledge the justice of my fate. Yes, twenty illustrious descents are hardly sufficient to wash out the stain *one* unhappy error has thrown upon our family! You do right, Miss Somerville, to suspect, and to shew that you suspect me of harbouring sentiments my very soul abhors! Such an insult was reserved for the sister of the unhappy Anna De Ross!"

She uttered these words with a haughty and indignant air, which Julia knew not whether to interpret into the dignity of virtue, or the boldness of vice. It was, in fact, the former. Weak and romantic as Amelia was, still she shrunk from the idea of guilt; though she could not deny herself

herself the sweet, mournful, dangerous pleasure of occasionally seeing and conversing with the man whom she had once loved above all beings.

De Ross, too, who was as great an enthusiast as herself, felt almost persuaded that he now experienced for her only that gentle friendship justified by their proximity in blood—a friendship which the sight of her declining health heightened to a degree of painful interest.

The consciousness of her innocence, however, did not prevent Amelia's hatred from increasing ten shades deeper, from the period of this mortifying explanation with Julia. From that time she considered her as a spy upon her conduct. She had another reason for wishing her removal. The youngest of lord Lulworth's numerous daughters was just arrived at the age to be introduced into the world; and, as she had no mother, Amelia, who was sincerely attached to her family, and who was one of those sick ladies who are very ill

ill to-day and very well to-morrow, felt desirous of having Caroline De Ross under her own roof.

She designed Julia's place in the house for her; but, as the most unprincipled persons, who are not utterly depraved, always require some mental apology to gloss over, in their own eyes, the impropriety of their conduct, Mrs. Somerville was far from acknowledging, even to herself, that these two motives were the real causes of her persecution of Julia. No, all she wished was Miss Somerville's advantage; and in trying to help her off to a fortune and coronet, she was surely studying that advantage most efficaciously.

Julia found the hope she long fondly cherished, of hearing from Lascelles, like all her foregone hopes, deceiving; and from his utter silence, she could only conclude that he considered the affair as entirely broken off.—" At least he will see by the papers," she said, " that I have *not* accepted his rival;" and so unwilling is the

the human mind to let go its hold of some semblance of happiness, that Julia ingeniously considered this species of public and *negative* information as a kind of correspondence with her lover. She required these resources of an active spirit, sharpened by misery, to bear up against the species of persecution to which she was now, in domestic life, exposed.

Sometimes indeed Amelia, who was, as we have before said, neither destitute of sensibility or generosity, would see the cruelty of her own conduct, and reproach herself for it. Her manner would then seem to bespeak the indulgence of Julia's superior mind for an unhappy creature whose concealed, but ungovernable passions were destroying alike her health and peace.

Then she would be, for a few days, all kindness, attention, and *prevenance*, bestowing on Julia a portion of those fond endearments which had so completely subjugated her brother.

But

But Miss Somerville, who had too frequently experienced the inefficacy of this repentance, the transient nature of these fits of remorse, was rather oppressed than soothed by these blandishments; and at length, quite unable to return the capricious regard of a person she had ceased to esteem, she found Amelia penitent, if possible, more insupportable than Amelia haughty, petulant, and unjust.

Captain De Ross left town the day he announced he should do so, but had returned since that period; and Amelia persisted in seeing him in private, when she was denied to every other visitor. Secure in the pride of rectitude, she made light of Julia's remonstrances, as the scruples of a little mind, and would sometimes give an indignant answer, and sometimes answer playfully—"I repeat it, your Pastor Fido is a more dangerous person than my African magician."

"What is this African magician?" one day Somerville inquired, with that dislike

men commonly betray on observing any secret intelligence between the females of their family.

"It is a foolish joke of lady Claremont's, my love, totally unworthy your attention," answered Amelia, mildly. "Charlotte calls my cousin, Armine de Ross, on account of his expedition into Africa, and almost miraculous escape, the African Magician. I am not sorry for the opportunity of referring our disputes, however, to you. My state of health not allowing me to receive indifferent visitors, and my cousin, De Ross, being very soon to leave this part of the world for the Brazils, I have been guilty of seeing him once or twice during his stay in town, when it was not in my power to be found surrounded by a complete '*cercle.*' This does not meet your sister's ideas of propriety; but, to you, the kindest, most attentive of husbands, who have always seemed to take a particular pleasure at seeing me in the midst of my family, I submit myself without

out fear. If you forbid the visits of captain De Ross, I obey without an effort; if you do not, I shall continue to permit his inquiries during the short period he remains here, and despise the misconstructions of malice."

As she concluded this artful speech, Amelia turned her eye, beaming with dovelike softness when she addressed Horatio, towards Julia, with a look as dark as hatred could bestow. Never in his life had Somerville been more embarrassed. In his soul he detested the sight of captain De Ross, and entirely coincided with his sister's opinion; but how vex his charming, high-spirited Amelia?—"To be sure, my dear," he answered, in a hesitating voice, "when I said I liked to see you surrounded by your family, I rather had your aunts and sisters in view than your male relatives. But if, as you say, this African Marabout, your dark, fierce-looking cousin, is going to set sail for the Antipodes—I mean for the Brazils, he is cer-

tainly welcome, at any time, to call to take leave."

"You were always a dear, kind soul," said Amelia, embracing him, and affecting to see nothing but what was obliging in this speech; "and now I hope, Miss Somerville, your outrageous delicacy is satisfied."

"My opinion remains what it was, dear Mrs. Somerville!" Julia answered, with unaffected gentleness. "As I never called in question the real propriety of your conduct, my brother's decision cannot increase my respect for it. All I ventured to observe was, that captain De Ross is too young, and you are too lovely, to allow him any flattering distinctions, without risking the malicious censures of the world."

Amelia was out of patience.—"This well becomes you," she said—"you, who refuse an alliance which would make us all happy, to persevere in an unrequited attachment to a man who now thinks not of

of you, though his devotion to you was notorious during the lifetime of my sister, his unhappy wife."

Every distressing suggestion that female malice could combine was united to overwhelm the unfortunate Julia in this speech. Almost gasping from suppressed emotion, Julia turned her supplicating eyes on Somerville—"Oh, my brother. speak!" she said; "does your sister deserve this? did I, at Rothbury, encourage the addresses of a married man? and do I now——" Her voice failed her from contending feelings, and she waited for Somerville's encouraging reply.

Not reflecting that Julia's judgment was as clear, her mind as firm, as it was truly gentle and delicate, Horatio falsely thought that, by appearing to coincide with Amelia, in throwing a tinge of blame on her attachment to Adolphus, he might induce her to renounce it. He was therefore silent; and Julia in vain again appealed to his justice and humanity—in

vain she adjured her brother to speak for her. Somerville was completely under the influence of a beautiful and bewitching young woman, transformed, by her evil passions, into a fiend, and whose charms were all directed to the attainment of one object, by the potent energy of hatred. Fatal principle!—in some minds more active than even love itself!

"Oh, Horatio!" exclaimed Julia, clasping her hands in an agony of feeling, "that it should ever come to this!" and covering her face with her handkerchief, she burst into a flood of tears.

Somerville was affected at the moment; but as Julia made her reappearance at dinner-time with recovered serenity, he calmed his conscience, by considering what had passed as a trifling female quarrel that was already forgotten. Always used to extravagant demonstrations of grief or joy in Amelia, he erroneously concluded, that the gentle sorrow which could dissolve into a shower of tears was neither deep

nor

nor dangerous. He was mistaken—*le coup était porté.*

Julia saw that the being in whom she had "garnered up her heart" no longer acted upon the impulses of his own judgment, and meditated nothing, thenceforward, but a proper and amicable separation. She was in the habit of receiving from Somerville an allowance which she resolved should answer her expences, for on one thing she was determined—never to demand of her brother the restitution of any part of the fortune of which he had so unthinkingly deprived her. An union of delicacy and affection for him prompted this romantic determination; but minds like hers find, in a generous deed, the only compensation for the loss of happiness. She was very desirous of effecting this separation before the departure of the family from town, to preclude the necessity of another removal with them; and chance offered her the opportunity she looked for, in a very warm invitation from

lady Claremont, who was going down to Hastings. Julia accepted it without hesitation, gratified with the prospect of spending a few ensuing months in the company of a person who professed so highly to love and esteem her, and leaving it to chance and circumstances to determine whether she should then return to her brother's for a time, or form some other engagement.

The Somervilles had taken a house at Clifton, and were, one day, after dinner, talking over their plans, when Julia mentioned, with perfect simplicity and good-humour, that she should not be of the party, as she had accepted an invitation for the summer from lady Claremont.

"What! without letting me know!" said Amelia, with a look of irrepressible displeasure.

"What! going to run away from us!" exclaimed Somerville, in an accent between gaiety and confusion. "My dear Julia! this is unkind of you; we shall never be able to do without you at Clifton. We

We are to make several visits in the neighbourhood, and to have private theatricals, and I know not what. Indeed you should have consulted us. Do you think any of your movements can be indifferent to me?"

"No, not indifferent; but——" Julia had scarcely brought out those few words, when a certain choking warned her of the probable approach of the "pearly intruders," that wait upon recollections so painful and conflicting as, at this moment, agitated her bosom. Disliking the display of sensibility as much as some ladies affect it, she tried to turn off Horatio's remonstrances, and Amelia's often-reiterated reproach of—"You prefer lady Claremont to me," with an air of gaiety far, very far, from the feelings of her heart.—"I consider Mrs. Somerville, without flattery," she said, "as one of the most fortunate of women; while lady Claremont, to induce me to visit her, pleaded her widowed solitude: and surely the widow stands most

in need of support and pity—almost as much as the fatherless."

But in this sally Julia relied too much on her own strength. The expression she herself had inadvertently made use of too fatally recalled her own peculiar causes of affliction. Pressed down by the double disappointment of her heart's dearest wishes, she had now arrived at that morbid state of mind which in every thing finds "fuel for its life-consuming sorrow," and could, too truly, subscribe to that eloquent description of grief—"*Savez-vous ce que c'est que la douleur?—C'est lorsque tout fait couler des larmes!—C'est lorsque tout ramène à la même idée—ranime le même chagrin, quoique continuellement senti!*"

From her early misfortunes, her feelings had received a shock which it would have required the constant attentions of the tenderest friendship gradually to obliterate. Instead of that, she had met, from Amelia, with unprovoked unkindness. Again silent, from emotion, she left the field

field to Amelia, who exerted all her rhetoric to persuade her to give up the party to Hastings, and go with them to Clifton. This earnestness astonished Miss Somerville. A little polite opposition she had expected; but it was now evident that Amelia, who, for some time back, had virtually done every thing to make her home unpleasant to her, was now equally sincere in the desire to keep her as a guest. What her motive for this new plan of conduct could be, Julia could not divine, but felt certain, whenever the mystery was explained, it would prove to be something which concerned the interest of Mrs. Somerville.

Finding all her eloquence vain, for Julia mildly, but firmly, pleaded the impossibility of causelessly disappointing lady Claremont, Amelia had recourse to that froward pettishness which she had reason to think was sometimes found very charming by the idolizing Horatio. —"See, my heart! how ill-natured she is!"

exclaimed the wayward fair—"she will not give up to oblige me—and in my state of health, too, when I made it a point! how can people be so selfish?"

Much as he indulged his pretty wife, Horatio could scarcely forbear smiling at this accusation of selfishness, from the spoiled and petted Amelia, who had never, for at least six months past, consulted, in any instance, the wishes of Julia. But he was not prepared for the modest requisition that followed—"My heart! make her do it, or I will never appear at table again—nay, I will not go down to Clifton unless accompanied by Miss Somerville!"

Here was *guerre ouverte*, and there seldom has been a more perplexed mortal than Horatio. He despaired, after what had passed, of being able to prevail over the good sense of Julia; and yet he knew nothing short of absolute submission would satisfy the exacting Amelia.

During the few days the family remained in town, there was not an obstacle ingenuity

genuity could suggest, that Amelia did not throw in her sister-in-law's way, in order to retain her a prisoner (it could not be called a friend) in her house. Some reader may ask why? Is not this inconsistent with the whole tenor of Mrs. Somerville's wishes and conduct?—Patience! curious damsel! am I bound to account to thee for the actions of my principal personages? Nevertheless, to allay the fever of curiosity, I here pledge myself, in a very few pages, to unfold the cause of Amelia's new-born taste for her sister's company, and wholly to redeem her from the charge of inconsistency.

By patience, good sense, and good-humour, Julia at length triumphed over these artificial difficulties, and had the satisfaction, without any open quarrel, to find herself settled in lady Claremont's delightful residence at Hastings.

Somerville, however, upon this, the first departure of his once-loved sister from under his roof, felt an aching void in his heart, mingled

mingled with very troublesome sensations, to which some mental physician might perhaps have given the name of self-reproach. This was increased by a trifling incident which happened the day before he left London. In the letter announcing her safe arrival at lady Claremont's, his sister also mentioned, that, by mistake, she had left behind her a pocketbook, containing, as she believed, valuable notes, which she begged him to forward to her. She designated the bureau where it was to be found, and there Somerville discovered it with very little difficulty. He determined to add a very handsome present to the amount of the notes; and opening the pocketbook with that intention, an old letter fell out. Perceiving it was in his own hand, he mechanically glanced his eye over it. It was the letter written during their short and only separation, giving an account of the villa in Cumberland. Towards the close, among a variety of affectionate expressions, he met with this often-repeated

repeated engagement—"May the good forsake me in this world, and Heaven abandon me in the next, on the day that I forget thee, Julia!"

CHAPTER X.

But greater ills removed, the less remain
Shorn of their pointed stings, and lose their bane.
Distant alike from pain's incumbent gloom,
And sprightly pleasure's gaily kindling bloom.
The vital powers effuse a softer flame,
And with serener beams pervade the frame.

MISS SEWARD.

. . . .

Stelle! Io mi trovo
D'un amica rivale; che far, se parto
L'irriterà; se taccio
Tradisco l'amistà Potrei con arte
Custodire il mistero
Senza tradir—no—chi ricorre all' arti
Benchè ancor non tradisca è sul cammino;
L'artifizio alla frode e assai vicino. METASTASIO.

OFTEN, when a continued course in the same line of conduct has deadened the feelings

feelings as to the impropriety of it, an incidental circumstance will place that conduct in its proper light. So it happened with Horatio. The accidental sight of a letter, in which he had repeated the vow so often and so solemnly taken, to love and protect a sister whom he had, of late, so neglected and injured, placed his own cruelty and injustice at once before his eyes; and the pangs of self-reproach were at first bitter and terrible.

Julia was meanwhile enjoying as much pleasure as the most complete contrast between obliging politeness and mortifying neglect could afford her. Lady Claremont seemed determined to prove herself, in every thing, the opposite of Mrs. Somerville, and spared no pains to amuse and entertain her guest. As it was not high season, they had still many hours upon their hands; and during these intervals of leisure, lady Claremont gave Miss Somerville some insight into her former life. She introduced it in her usual abrupt, eccentric

centric manner—"Dear Julia!" she said, one morning, to her, "promise me one thing!"

Julia laughingly defended herself from making any rash engagement, and her ladyship at length resumed—"It is, that you will never marry! For a feeling mind there is not a chance of happiness. Who appeared more blessed than I? Married to the man of my choice—rich, handsome, engaging—and yet he made me miserable! One fatal infirmity of temper poisoned all his good qualities. I had not been married a month before lord Claremont's jealousy appeared; and from that time—Oh, Heaven!" Here her ladyship paused, then, after a short silence, resumed—"All who visited at Clairville thought me happy—all but *one*. He had penetration to discover my inward misery, and delicacy to conceal his discovery from every eye; yet I soon perceived that he regarded me with the tenderest respect and pity. Pity was useless to me then; my heart was

was 'vowed away and gone.' Had I known him sooner——"

"Surely it is not too late, if he still lives!" interrupted Julia; "you are now free to make a happier choice."

The fair widow lifted up her blue eye, with an air of fervent devotion to Heaven, and clasping her hands upon her breast, where hung the handsome portrait of lord Claremont, vehemently pronounced the word—"Never!"

Here they were interrupted by the entrance of a servant, who said—"The milk-woman and the shepherd are below, my lady, and wait your leisure."

"Bid them walk up," my lady replied. "Now, Julia, I will shew you something really entertaining."

Accustomed every day to some new eccentricity of her ladyship, Julia was still at a loss for what was to follow, when a trall, strapping woman, in a red cloak, entered the room, as she had been desired, and, dropping a low curtsey, said, in a

stentorian

stentorian voice—" Servant, ladies!" She was followed by a " hoary-headed swain," who had seen seventy winters, at least, and whose ruddy, though weather-beaten cheeks, proclaimed him rather accustomed to the fields than to any manual handicraft.—" I was told, my lady, you wanted to speak to me," said the milkwoman at last, wearied by the silence which, in lady Claremont, had succeeded to surprise.

" Oh dear, no, Mrs. Barnes!" exclaimed her lively ladyship; " I—the fact is——" She looked at Julia; but Julia was unable to help her out in a scene she was utterly at a loss to comprehend.—" In short," resumed lady Claremont, " my people are very stupid, Mrs. Barnes, and utterly mistook my intentions. But that is no reason you should suffer: I beg you will send me twice the usual quantity of your best cream this evening. And who may you be, my good friend?" she continued, addressing the veteran.

" I be John Collins, shepherd to farmer Hardflint,

Hardflint, man and boy, these sixty years, at your ladyship's service."

"Well, John Collins, though you are not the Colin I expected, you are a man of merit, and I will put you on the list of my pensioners. It is a shame that those white hairs should be exposed to rain and wind in a life of hardship any longer."

"Thank you, my lady," returned the shepherd, in the English tone, between surliness and gratitude; "but I should take to my bed, I'm morally sure, if I'd nothing to do; and it's second nature to be among the fields like."

"Well, give this poor man something," said lady Claremont, as she commended her usual guests to the care of the housekeeper. Her ladyship then began pacing the room in an uncommon degree of vexation and displeasure.—"Barclay is so stupid," she said, speaking of her confidential maid; "she never did such a silly trick as this in her life before. What I am vexed at is your disappointment, Miss Somerville.

Somerville. I had prepared such a delightful, romantic evening for you."

"Till I know what *is* my disappointment," said Julia, with well-assumed gravity, "your ladyship must allow me to be insensible to its greatness."

Instead of answering her directly, lady Claremont continued to repeat—"Vexatious! perplexing! never saw any thing so awkward!" till Julia's curiosity was really roused; and at length she condescended to explain the singular scene.—"The whole circumstance," resumed her ladyship, "originated in Barclay's misapprehending my orders. I wanted to give you the pleasure of seeing and hearing Mrs. Bayntun, the celebrated milkwoman, and Colin, the South Down shepherd; and instead of that, the foolish creature sends me a real shepherd and a real milkwoman."

"And what are the others?"

"Two prodigies, patronized by lady Felicia Melcomb and myself. Colin, the South

South Down shepherd, who served a farmer on Mr. Melcomb's estate, made verses before he was twelve years old; and Mrs. Bayntun is still more extraordinary, for, with scarcely any education, she has already written poems, novels, and tragedies."

Julia might have remembered lady Claremont had a poetical enthusiasm, from the admiration she had heard her express for the poetry of that very lady Felicia Melcomb; but she had yet to learn that a literary production, from either of the two extremes of society, was received by her ladyship with almost-equal transport. Possessing a very pure taste, and with a tendency rather towards the correct than the marvellous, Julia had always experienced a disinclination to prodigies of this description; but, though expecting little gratification from the promised treat, she had too much good-nature to raise any objections, particularly as she saw that lady Claremont was persuaded it would afford her pleasure. Accordingly, on an evening

evening more propitious, they had Colin and Lucy (for such were their names) to tea. It did not appear to Miss Somerville that the poet and poetess liked one another. Each eyed the other as if they thought themselves the superior, and did not like to be classed together; and both seemed equally awed and embarrassed by the presence of Miss Somerville and lady Claremont. Colin, the shepherd, though plain, had something interesting in his appearance; but the woman was coarse, vulgar, and masculine, and in no way outwardly superior to the real milkwoman, as lady Claremont phrased it, who daily served her ladyship with cream. Finding the evening passed heavily, lady Claremont whispered Julia, in the true spirit of a *lion-leader*—"This is very dull work—what say you to a walk? We'll take them to the cliffs—perhaps that will inspire them."

Her ladyship accordingly directed her stroll towards the sea-side, and when arrived

rived among its finely-wooded cliffs, requested Mrs. Bayntun would awaken their echoes with some of her pastoral effusions. To this she readily agreed; but her voice was so untunable, and her manner so bad, that it was a real relief to the party when she had finished her recitation.

It was now time to ask Colin: but, though the shepherd had really an eye for nature, when musing among her awful solitudes at night, or in the stillness of gray morn, called up by the unfolding star*, he seemed, in such unaccustomed company, cold, timid, and embarrassed; and lady Claremont, despairing to animate him, turned to Mrs. Bayntun, and began talking to her of her works. The gentlewoman, not having much *tact*, took the opportunity to ask the ladies subscription to a novel she had in the press, and then began abusing the London managers for refusing her tragedy. After a few turns, she

* Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd.
SHAKSPEARE.

she observed it was time to go round with her milk; for she marked, with affected emphasis, that she was not above making mention of her lowly calling; and after two hours volubility, as oppressive as poor Colin's taciturnity was tiresome, the two prodigies took leave nearly at the same time.

"Well, it did not answer?" said lady Claremont, looking inquiringly in the countenance of her guest, and reading no expression of approbation there. "Lucy was not doing her best to-night. She has written much prettier things, I assure you, than those she recited; and several of Colin's are equal to the efforts of Dermody, or Newton, the Derbyshire carpenter. Come, I see you are not struck with my swans; give me sincerely your opinion of them."

"My opinion," answered Julia, modestly, "does not particularly attach itself to them, but strikes at the principle upon which they are produced; and as lady Claremont has taught me to consider her

no longer as an acquaintance, but a friend, I will freely confess it. When we discover, in a person deprived of the advantages of education, a spark of genius or sentiment, we are apt to overrate the merit of efforts produced under such disadvantages, and to mistake the pleasure of surprise for the admiration of excellence. I own I never saw the productions of any of those humble geniuses (always excepting dear, dear Burns, that true poet, whom nature claims alone), without thinking the trifling distinction they obtained but ill compensated for the fastidiousness, and probable discontent, at their lowly lot, induced by a partial, and only partial, degree of refinement."

"Then," inquired lady Claremont, "when we discover, in the peasant or mechanic, an uncommon spark of intelligence, would you have us crush it?"

"Far from it. On the contrary, give them the advantages of education, so far as it may enable them to indulge their natural

tural thirst for knowledge, and their superior intellect will probably raise them a step in the scale of society. All that I question is, whether it be judicious to obtrude their crude effusions on the public, which has learned to turn, with fastidious indifference, even from pleasing imagery and good versification, if not distinguished by any striking traits of originality, and which is cloyed with commonplace sentiments, conveyed through the medium of moderate poetry."

Lady Claremont listened with an earnestness which denoted rather attention than anger, and replied—"There is some truth in all you have observed. It gives me matter of reflection, and places the subject in a new point of view; will you be so good as to repeat it again?"

Julia laughed, and blushed, and laughed again, at this singular request, which her ladyship was in the habit of urging with the utmost seriousness, when her friend said any thing that she thought either

 good

good or new.—" You may eulogize me in the newspapers, publish my poems (when I write them)—any thing, dear madam," she gaily replied, " rather than induce me to repeat the trifling, and probably incorrect notions I have once thrown out."

There was a vehemence in lady Claremont's manner whenever she pressed a point, which formed a striking contrast with the feminine loveliness of her person, and the polished gentleness of her usual demeanour. At those times her requests were enforced with a suddenness, and her fine eye flashed a wild lustre, which often reminded Julia of what she had heard remarked at Rothbury—that every individual of the Lulworth family was distinguished by something odd and peculiar; and from what she herself had seen and heard of the different characters of the three sisters, lady Claremont, Mrs. Somerville, and Mrs. Lascelles, she was inclined to subscribe to the truth of the assertion.

With a few such interruptions as the *Soirée*

Soirée of Colin and Lucy, for her ladyship was fond of oddities and odd rencontres, Julia's time passed as pleasantly as the attentions of an elegant and amiable hostess, and a participation in all the fashionable amusements of the place, could make it. Still, on descending into the recesses of her own heart, Julia saw, with self-reproach and dismay, that she rather *tried* to love, than loved lady Claremont. There was something remarkably uncongenial between their characters. With all her ladyship's attractions, there were a violence and volatility in her temper, a want of rule and reason, sometimes, in her actions, which rendered her intercourse, however fascinating at first, unsatisfactory and fatiguing.

It was in those moments of despondence and depression, that the image of Lascelles arose involuntarily to Julia's imagination, adorned with every charm of virtue, humanity, and truth, which had once so completely satisfied her heart. She felt that

 there

there are beings whose place can be filled up, but can never be supplied. It was then she experienced with "Harolde," that—

"Ever and anon, of griefs subdued,
There comes a token, like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever; it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound.

"And how, and why, we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which, out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres which no exorcism can bind—
The cold, the changed, perchance the dead, anew—
The mourned, the loved, the lost—too many! yet how few!"

In a few moments the mental spasm was past, and Julia was able to pursue with resignation, if not with relish, life's little avocations.

Anxiety for her brother's fate succeeded.

ed. Horatio had written to her, from Clifton, a little history, which fully accounted for Amelia's great desire to detain her. It seems that, on learning they had taken a house there, Miss Ravenshawe had written to her niece, before the Somervilles left London, saying that, if it should prove agreeable to them, she would take the opportunity of visiting the Hot Wells, which she had never seen, and join their party, and, as she understood they had taken a house large enough to accommodate a friend, would feel great pleasure in being their guest for a month or two.

This was a thunderstroke upon Amelia, to see the place she had destined for her sister, the blooming and docile Caroline De Ross, occupied by the exacting and dictatorial Miss Ravenshawe. But there was no directly refusing aunt Ravenshawe. They had such great expectations from her, that she was one of the persons whom it was found necessary to treat with common civility. Still, if she could ingeniously

represent her house as a mere maisonnette, and assert with truth, that the only spare bed was occupied by Mr. Somerville's sister, whom it was impossible to turn out, however she must prefer the company of her dearest and most respected aunt, &c. &c. &c. the danger would be averted for the present, and no offence given. Her vexation knew no bounds, when this well-planned little scheme was overthrown for want of the co-operation of Julia; and Mrs. Somerville had the mortification to see her worst fears anticipated, in the arrival of the pompous Miss Ravenshawe.

The respect and attention this lady exacted effectually overthrew various delightful plans of parties, visits, and excursions, in the neighbourhood; but Horatio was the greatest sufferer by the arrangement. From the moment of his dear aunt's arrival, he bade adieu to the slightest shadow of domestic quiet. Imperious, haughty, and overbearing—proud of her riches, and vain of her wisdom, Miss Ravenshawe

venshawe preached, and prosed, and dictated, and dogmatized, without hindrance or molestation; for even the spirit of Amelia cowered before the still more determined spirit of her aunt.

It may be supposed there were parts of this information which Julia rather gathered than directly received, by perusing the confession of Horatio. His conclusion however was characteristic; he said, Miss Ravenshawe might be an agreeable person to pass a summer with, but that she made the Hot Wells too hot for *him*, and he should accordingly abridge his visit, merely to get rid of his troublesome guest.

How Julia wished she could have hastened to her dear brother, to administer to him that balm of consolation which, under all his assumed gaiety, it was but too evident he needed, for sufferings both of body and mind! but no friendly overture arrived from the sullen Amelia, and she felt an awkwardness in being the first to propose her own return, although her

 situation

situation with lady Claremont was far from what it had been.

Passionately addicted to novelty, and of a disposition as variable as her temper was light and inconstant, time, with this lady, rather soured than mellowed the fruits of friendship. To be an old acquaintance was only to have ceased to be a delightful new friend. Instead of giving you rights upon her, it seemed to justify her wrongs towards you. It was not unfrequent with the objects of her fondest attachment to be greeted with the most endearing epithets, at the first interview, and chilled with the coldest and most formal appellations at the last.

Whether it was simply owing to this caprice of nature, or whether, upon a reconsideration, lady Claremont did not like the freedom with which Julia had expressed herself on the subject of her *protégés*, or perhaps from some other cause, certain it is, the friendliness of her ladyship had abated much of its endearing charac-

ter,

ter, when an incident occurred, that threatened to set all the combustible sparks in her disposition in a flame.

Julia found the fair widow, one day, with an open letter in her hand, a volume of "*Vœux Téméraires*" spread before her, and the marks of tears too visible upon her lovely eyes. Addressing Miss Somerville with more of confidence than she had lately shewn her—"Advise with me, my friend," she cried; "I am now arrived at the most critical moment of my existence. Yes, he is coming," she added, lifting up her eyes, and with a deep sigh —"the man whose generous pity——But what! do I talk of pity? It is love—love, the most pure and fervent, of which he writes to me, and claims the long reward of his silence during the period I could not be his—and I must refuse him!"

Julia now comprehended that her ladyship alluded to the same person she had mentioned in the short and hurried sketch

she had once given of her married life. As lady Claremont had never recurred to the subject, she had forborne to ask even the name of the gentleman, and was now at a loss to know what species of advice her fair friend required of her.

Lady Claremont had concluded with a declaration that she must refuse this offer, which she seemed but too well inclined to accept; she now resumed—"I have been too unhappy in married life ever to trust to love's uncertain smiles again; and yet, by not doing so, I must plunge a dagger into that generous breast, which sacrificed every thing to the peace of mine."

"Is not such conduct," asked Julia, "the best security that you need not fear a repetition of those dreaded calamities?"

Lady Claremont seemed somewhat struck with this remark, but, after a moment's meditation, replied—"What if I had taken a vow never again to embark on that perilous sea?"

"Why

"Why then I should answer," said Julia, laughing, "that—

> "Ease may recant
> "Vows made in pain, as violent and void."

"Oh, my friend, this is not a subject to treat with levity! The fact is so, and I must frame my answer accordingly."

Rather glad to be relieved from the task of adviser, Julia withdrew, to let her ladyship write her letter.

It was dispatched; and some hours had elapsed before she recollected that, during the whole time the subject was under discussion, she had never once heard the name of this mysterious lover. This, on lady Claremont's part, was purely accidental, for she had no idea he bore any relation to her friend's concerns; but Julia was young, and had yet to learn, that, under the fairest face, a person may act a double part.

Whether it was from any ambiguity in the style of the fair widow's response, or that the audacious lover chose wilfully, to misunderstand

misundertand its tenor, certain it is, that he replied to it the ensuing week, by presenting himself at her ladyship's marine villa; and Julia beheld in him one who had lately made pretensions of the tenderest nature to herself—no less a person than the earl of Rothbury!

Though all lady Claremont's preconcerted arrangements were overthrown by this unexpected apparition, still she had resolution enough to act up to the manner she deemed worthy of herself, and, in a subsequent explanation she had with his lordship, convinced him that he had nothing to hope beyond her friendship.

Julia learnt from lady Claremont herself the result of this interview, and learnt also, with satisfaction, that the disappointed peer was setting off instantly for Brighton; for though she felt not the slightest resentment against him, for thus abruptly changing the object of a pursuit that had never been agreeable to her, yet still she anticipated an awkwardness in meeting him, and

and was heartily rejoiced at the prospect of his departure.

Whether from experiencing some need of dissipation to rally her spirits, or having those spirits already exhilarated by the consciousness of her victory, lady Claremont announced her intention of going to the rooms that evening; and Julia, who stood in need of no such excitement, determined to devote it to music and reading. A passionate lover of that delightful art, a new musical publication was to her what a new book is to others; and having comparatively but little time to indulge that taste, she rejoiced in the prospect of a few leisure hours.

The curtains were drawn, the candles lit, and Julia had just finished an enchanting prelude, when she observed a movement in the drapery near her harp, and the figure of lord Rothbury struck her view. However startled, she had instantly presence of mind enough to inform him of that of which she supposed him ignorant,

norant, the absence of the mistress of the mansion, and expressed her surprise at the mistake of the servants in admitting him.

"It was no mistake," answered lord Rothbury, calmly; "they knew it was Miss Somerville, not lady Claremont, I sought—Miss Somerville, who so unkindly quitted London without giving me any idea where to seek her."

"This language would suit you better, my lord," answered Julia, "if I did not know the cause that brought you to Hastings."

Lord Rothbury had hoped lady Claremont had not communicated his pretensions; but finding Julia better informed than he wished, proceeded to defend himself.—"Hear me, Miss Somerville," he said: "when *first* I knew lady Claremont, she appeared to me a most interesting being; the more so from her labouring under a strange species of persecution; but I respected her too much to give her an idea to what a point she interested me. Though she

she was become a widow, I had not been more explicit with her at the time I became acquainted with you. I then found that I had mistaken compassion for a warmer sentiment, and that I had never truly loved till now; you best know with what indifference that sincere affection was requited. Desirous, at length, to free myself from an attachment productive of so much unhappiness, I attempted to divert, if I could not conquer it, and on certain circumstances that I remembered during my former acquaintance with lady Claremont, grounded a belief that I was not indifferent to her, and flattered myself that her charms were sufficient to drive your image from my heart. But the moment I once more beheld you in her company convinced me of my error. I repented of the steps I had already taken, and no lover could be happier in the acceptance of his mistress than I was with the rejection of mine, which enabled me, without dishonourable conduct, once more to

try

try if absence and change of place may not have produced some favourable revolution in your ideas respecting me."

At this moment a kind of trembling in the air, usually the accompaniment or precursor of music, was distinctly perceptible, and a flute, of most exquisite sweetness, warbled beneath the window a sweet, low, Italian air.

Lord Rothbury seemed disposed to afford little attention to the invisible melodist; but Julia turned pale, and said— —"Trust me, my lord, we have been overheard; and every thing that has been said will be repeated, with comments not very advantageous to me."

"We!" reiterated lord Rothbury, passionately. "Repeat but that charming monosyllable, which unites us, and I fear nothing! Rather, with your permission, I will make my passion as public as I feel persuaded it is worthily placed, and, instead of Brighton, direct my course to Clifton, to arrange with your brother every thing

thing for the completion of my happiness."

Here the flute was heard again, running the most exquisite variations upon another Italian air; and Julia, who seemed to have a strange horror and aversion to this musical demon, whoever he might be, again conjured his lordship to detain her no longer; adding, as she might, alas! with but too much truth, that it was impossible for her to promise her hand, when to bestow her heart was not in her own power.

Lord Rothbury at length withdrew, but determined not to take this as her last answer; something he had heard respecting discontents in her family, which her present absence from her brother seemed to confirm; and he could not help fancying that Julia, unhappy at home, would need but little persuasion to accept the advantages he offered her.

It is now time to explain the cause of Miss Somerville's alarm. Some months before, lady Claremont had adopted the

son

son of a deceased musician whom she patronized; and instead of directing this child's attention to any useful pursuit, clothed him in fantastical habits—sometimes Spanish, sometimes Polish or Hungarian; and as he was beautiful and intelligent beyond his years, gave him the title of her page. The young Orlando, for such was his baptismal appellation, grew in mischief as in size. Having no allotted task to attend to, he acquired a thousand bad habits, and, among others, was so notorious an eavesdropper, that he was the hatred and terror of the house. Now the windows of the music-room, in which Julia had unwillingly entertained lord Rothbury, reached to the floor, and opened upon the grounds. From the heat of the weather, they were but partially shaded with drapery, through which an observer might easily obtain a glimpse of the company within.

There Orlando was wandering, under pretence of practising his flute, near a fine marble

marble bason, whose waters formed an object from the windows, but, in reality, as Julia had too justly apprehended, to listen to and report the words he could pick up. Her fears were but too soon verified.

As lady Claremont returned home very late from the ball, she was not visible the early part of the ensuing day; but, as Julia was preparing to meet her ladyship in the saloon, Barclay came in, with a most tragical face of assumed concern, exclaiming—"Lord ha' mercy on us! what shall we all come to? There's my lady has half-murdered her little page, and is in such a twitter, I hardly dare to call my life my own. Indeed I never like to speak to her when she is in those takings."

Barclay was followed by lady Claremont, her eyes flashing, and her whole frame trembling under the excess of her emotion. Waving the attendant from her presence, she exclaimed, darting on Julia a look of the keenest indignation—"So! it is admirable! I am an object of generous

generous pity to my tender lover and more tender friend!—'No lover is happier in the acceptance of his mistress than mine is with the rejection of his.'—Oh, 'tis monstrous! you, Miss Somerville, whom I so lovèd and trusted, thus to carry on a clandestine correspondence under my roof! And it was for this you refused to accompany me abroad! To receive the separate visits of lord Rothbury you made the pretext of loving solitude!"

"Lady Claremont," said Julia, calmly, "I wish you would defer, till you are cooler, an explanation that might save you the pain of uttering expressions you will in vain regret."

"Answer me but one question," said her ladyship, a little awed by her manner: "Did lord Rothbury, or did he not (for I spurned Orlando, and would not believe it when he asserted so)—did lord Rothbury pay you any addresses in town?"

Julia hesitated a moment in her reply; but, however unwilling to relate circumstances

stances of this sort, she thought that, on such an occasion, sincerity should supersede delicacy, and briefly replied that he had.

"And when I consulted you upon the subject, you concealed it from me!" lady Claremont exclaimed.

"Your ladyship forgets," returned Julia, "that, during the short consultation you held with me, it so chanced that the name of lord Rothbury never escaped your lips. I remained therefore ignorant that he was the person in question till his arrival at Villa Marina. His presenting himself to me, and the language he afterwards held, were circumstances equally unexpected and undesired on my part. I gave his proposals a decided refusal—a circumstance your reporter did not seem to think it necessary to mention, and should have done so, quite independent of the double part which I think he has acted by me and your ladyship."

Having said what she thought necessary for

for the vindication of her own honour, Julia withdrew, without waiting a reply, and left lady Claremont rather confounded at the vehemence she had so incautiously exhibited. The mischievous disposition of her little page had occasioned it. Taking a turn in the grounds, she had encountered Orlando practising by the piece of water, his favourite haunt. He had instantly related to her, and with a great deal of mischievous exaggeration, the particulars he had heard the night before.

Lady Claremont listened to him with a perturbation of mind only to be guessed by those thoroughly acquainted with her character; but when Orlando came to the galling expression in which lord Rothbury exulted in 'being freed from her chains, she furiously exclaimed—" 'Tis false!" and violently pushing him from her, his foot slipped, and, as he was already on the water's edge, the unfortunate favourite made but one step into the water.

On hearing his cries, two or three servants

vants ran to his assistance; while lady Claremont, goaded on by passion, rushed into the saloon, and loaded Miss Somerville with reproaches, as we have above related; for she was one of those inconsistent females, who, though they have absolutely rejected the addresses of a lover, cannot bear that his attentions should be transferred to another object.

Misfortunes never come singly. Scarcely had lady Claremont recovered from the confusion occasioned by her own unfeminine violence, when Barclay entered, with a heart full of malicious joy, and a face of most lamentable length, to say—"Oh dear, my lady! what are we to do with poor little Mr. Orlando? He had a shivering fit since we picked him out of the water, and is now very sick and feverish."

"Send for doctor Blake instantly!" said her ladyship. "Heaven grant the dear child has not experienced any material harm!" and, distracted with new emo-

 tions,

tions, she flew to the couch of the suffering Orlando.

But there she was not even suffered to indulge her well-earned anxiety uninterrupted. Scarcely had she addressed to the sobbing urchin some soothing caresses, when a message came, that a gentleman, who positively refused to send up his name, requested to see lady Claremont.

"Say that I am busy—that I can see no one," said her ladyship, peevishly.

"Oh dear, my lady! he has been told so two or three times over, but says he wont delay your ladyship five minutes, and persists in declaring he must see you."

Roused to some curiosity by this description, lady Claremont descended to the drawing-room.

She was met by a dignified-looking stranger, clad in deep black. He bowed gracefully, and said—"I have to apologize to lady Claremont for an intrusion which I feel would be unprecedented, were my

motives

motives less strong than they are—the reparation of error, and the restitution of justice."

Somewhat awed by this exordium, lady Claremont requested the mysterious stranger to proceed.

"My business," he resumed, "is with Miss Somerville. I understood she was an inhabitant of the Villa Marina, or should not have troubled your ladyship."

"She shall be instantly apprised of it," said lady Claremont, and at the same time rung to desire that Julia might be summoned, when she received the unexpected answer, that Miss Somerville was gone out.

This seemed a real mortification to the stranger, who then respectfully inquired at what time he might be most likely to see Miss Somerville?

Having obtained the desired information, he again apologized to her ladyship, and was rising to take leave, when lady Claremont, observing that he left no further

message or card, hesitatingly said—"Your name, sir?"

"*That,*" said the stranger, "must be for Miss Somerville's ear alone. It would cause her feelings too painful a shock, if repeated, and might wholly frustrate my desire of an interview."

He bowed and departed; but to lady Claremont the whole scene had so much the air of romance, that it contributed greatly to harmonize her spirits. Her ladyship's anger was usually as shortlived as violent.

When Miss Somerville returned from her excursion, she apologized very handsomely for her warmth of the morning; and then, resuming the tone of raillery, which was the tone she liked best, said—"You lost something by your absence, however short; only I have a promise the gentleman will make you amends to-morrow. A new arrival has been making inquiries about you—dark as a nabob, handsome as the master of Ravenswood, and

yet,

yet, now I think of it, too dark, too stern, to be called very handsome neither; he has *un air distingué*, too, and yet not exactly that of our admired young men of fashion; and, to crown the whole, keeps so strict an incognito, that he will not even trust my discreet ladyship with his name; alleging that the repetition of it might prove too painful to Miss Somerville, on whom he means, to-morrow, to have the honour of waiting. I forgot to add, he is clothed in such deep black, he must be either a widower, or a clergyman, or perhaps both."

This last observation struck her auditor the most, for, to Julia, of course, there existed in the world but one clergyman and one widower.

Julia, who had never expected to experience the lively emotions of surprise or pleasure again, felt, notwithstanding her philosophy, agreeably animated and fluttered by the prospect of receiving this strange visitor, whose name, rank, and the

cause of his interest in her, she found herself utterly unable to guess.

She fully determined to be at home, all the following day, to this mysterious stranger, who, as lady Claremont described him, was handsome and *not* handsome, fashionable and not fashionable; who had very much the air of a widower, a clergyman, and a nabob; and who, to crown the whole, had refused to leave his name; alleging, as her ladyship protested, that it was one which would cause Miss Somerville too much emotion.

CHAP-

CHAPTER XI.

> Non è sana ogni gioja,
> Nè mal cio che v'annoja.
> Quello è vero gioire
> Che nasce da virtù dopo il soffrire. GUARINI.

AT the usual visiting hour, a stranger was announced as inquiring for Miss Somerville. With some trepidation she ordered him to be shewn up. Lady Claremont had had the delicacy to leave her the drawing-room to herself, to receive him in.

On his entrance Miss Somerville experienced a rush of painful emotions; and yet, so rapid and various had been the events of her life, she could not immediately recall the name of the man who occasioned them, though his features were perfectly familiar to her mind.

The stranger began—" It is my pain-

ful task to be obliged to recall myself to the memory of Miss Somerville. I am but too conscious my name is one she can never hear pronounced without horror; it is De Burgh."

Though Julia had been some hours preparing herself for a disclosure of an agitating nature, she was not proof against the shock of again beholding the virtual murderer of her father. She fell back in her chair, and was some moments before recovering her reason and self-possession. After swallowing a glass of water, she was able faintly to bid him proceed; though it seemed to her a sort of impiety to prolong a conversation with the man whose culpable irregularity had brought such accumulated misery upon her house.

Mr. De Burgh was equally desirous of sparing her the pain of a long interview. He soon came to the object of his visit. He had been, since those disastrous events, as lucky as the family of Somerville had been unfortunate. One successful specu-

lation

lation had raised this rash, but not unprincipled character, to the pinnacle of prosperity. It was now his object to atone, as much as was in his power, to the Somerville family, for the miseries he had, unintentionally, heaped upon them.

De Burgh informed her, in addition, that he was just returned from Ireland, from attending the deathbed of an elder brother, whose decease had left him rich beyond his wishes. He had immediately inquired out the residence of Mr. Somerville, but had been unable to learn where he actually was; on which account he now applied to Julia.

Miss Somerville blushed, for she well knew the reason of this difficulty. Horatio had recently written to her that he was in London, living, or rather hiding, from his creditors, and Miss Ravenshawe in his town-house; for he had left to his abode all the outward appearance of a residence which the family have quitted for the country, and had actually his name in-

 serted,

serted, in several newspapers, as among the illustrious swallows who are skimming all over England.

However averse, in general, to complaining, Horatio also acknowledged, in return to the solicitous and affectionate inquiries of his sister, that his health was not what it had been. Still he made light of the circumstance, and, with a gleam of his former humour, observed, that, after all, he believed gold was the sovereign "medicine potable," which, if it could be obtained, would soon cure him of all his ills.

That this sovereign good might not arrive too late, was Julia's fervent prayer, when she heard Mr. De Burgh unfold his intentions.

"Your brother, I understand," he said, "has now no interest in the house which my mad folly contributed so considerably to involve; but that makes no difference in my desire of making what restitution I can to the son of Mr. Somerville. I was

was seduced into errors, but never into intentional guilt. An Irishman may be imprudent, blamably imprudent, but never can be base; still the desire, even of vindicating my personal honour, is, I acknowledge, but a secondary consideration with me, compared to my anxiety to recover some portion of Miss Somerville's esteem."

From this, and several other declarations that escaped Mr. De Burgh, during the course of their conference, a person, less habituated to the looks and language of admiration than Julia, must have perceived that the gallant Irishman was disposed to make her all manner of amends for the vexation he had caused her; but, even if she had been disposed to admit the idea of a second love into her breast, an engagement with Mr. De Burgh was horror to think of; and she soon made him understand, that, if he wished to obtain her esteem, he must aspire to nothing more.

The love of De Burgh for Julia Somer-

ville was indeed no new emotion. In her father's house he had watched and admired her expanding charms, but thought her, at that period, too young and gay to listen favourably to a serious proposal from him. He had flattered himself the change in her situation might make her now overlook her objections to him; but, though disappointed in this hope, his ardour to atone for his past conduct to Somerville suffered no diminution; and, having obtained from Julia her brother's address, he set off the following day for London.

This interview left Julia a prey to reflections the most various and distracting. Since they last met, care and anxiety had worked as great an alteration in Mr. De Burgh's person as his mind. She doubted whether, on his first presenting himself, Somerville would recognise him, and trusted he would not do so without using proper precautions, as she had already warned him her brother was in a precarious

rious state of health. Her desire to be with this dear brother hourly increased. Now she was to be the messenger of good news, she felt neither awkwardness nor unwillingness at the idea of returning to his house; and having just dispatched a line, to make sure that her presence would not be unwelcome, thought of nothing but how to gratify the sisterly feelings of her heart.

An opportunity soon presented itself. A lady, with whom she had contracted some intimacy, and who was going up to town, offered her a vacant place in her carriage.

Lady Claremont, endeavouring to dissemble to herself how much she was inwardly pleased at being rid of her too-fascinating guest, parted with a multitude of fond endearments, and an extorted promise from Julia, to write to her the moment she arrived in town.

The part of the town to which her friend was going allowed of her setting

Julia

Julia down at her brother's very door; and it was with a mixed feeling, that Miss Somerville again found herself in an abode where she had experienced much pain and some few agreeable hours. There was such an appearance of hurry, disorder, and confusion, that she could scarcely recognise her former habitation; and, but for the unexpected appearance of Mr. De Burgh, would have experienced at first the chill and comfortless sensation of being a stranger, though at home.

A great part of the furniture was covered up or removed. The rooms were dismantled of their pictures, glasses, and hangings; the hall obstructed with corded trunks and packages. Against the wall, unframed, and in an unfinished state, leant a large and beautiful painting in oils, by Lawrence, representing Mrs. and Miss Somerville, grouped in an attitude of friendship. In the saloon, which was alone still tolerably furnished, odd and ill-looking men were peeping about, as if waiting

waiting for something—lounging over newspapers, and soiling the piled cushions of the sofas with their neglected morning dresses.

Julia observed several of the trunks and bandboxes were directed to Mrs. Somerville, at Miss Ravenshawe's. A cold shuddering seized her.—"Could it be possible Amelia had at length abandoned Horatio in his uttermost distress?"

From these painful conjectures she was recalled by the voice of Mr. De Burgh—"I have not been able to see Mr. Somerville yet," he said; "he was not well enough, I was told. Your presence, Miss Somerville, will, I trust, make my introduction more easy."

Their conversation was interrupted by a message, that Mr. Somerville was most desirous to see his sister.

In passing to Horatio's apartment, Julia saw the door of Amelia's dressing-room open, and Mrs. Jennings, her woman, in the

the midst of an ocean of silks, laces, jewels, ostrich plumes, and artificial flowers — "Putting up the rest of my lady's things, for the country, ma'am," she said, in answer to Miss Somerville's interrogative glance.

Julia's worst suspicions were confirmed. Marsden, who had staid behind, but always regretted her mistress, now came forward.—"Oh, my dear young lady, I *am* so glad you are come back! 'Twill be new life to Mr. Somerville, for he has nobody with him now but Mr. Lascelles."

"Lascelles!" repeated Julia.

"Yes, miss—my lady; but don't you go now for to be frightened at that. It's not for to talk to him like a passon, or any such frightful molloncholy stuff; for my concern for my poor dear master obliged me once or twice for to put my ear to the keyhole, and, as well as I could confiscate it, 'twas politics the gentlemen was a-talking. No, thank God! I hope we are not so bad as to be come for to talk of religion yet;

yet; though, for sure, your poor brother, ma'am, is in much more eminent danger than he likes people to think."

Lascelles had, at length, by the mere force and weight of his high intellectual and moral character, so far conquered the prejudices of lord Lulworth, as to convince that nobleman, who was still more worldly-minded than tyrannical, that a perseverance in his ungenerous resentment would only render more public and perpetual his own disgrace. He now, therefore, affected to treat him as a family-connexion, and selected him, as the one of the family for whom Somerville had professed the most friendship, to be the bearer of a communication of peculiar delicacy and importance.

Breaking from the loquacious and indiscreet sympathy of poor Marsden, Julia, with a heart deeply oppressed, proceeded to her brother's chamber. Somerville was confined to a couch, and more altered than even her affectionate apprehensions had suggested as possible. Near the chimney-piece

piece stood Lascelles, apparently absorbed in considering how best to break to his friend the message of which the crafty lord Lulworth had made him the medium. The curls of his raven hair fell negligently over a countenance pale from watching and uneasiness; and the touching disorder of sorrow added its wild and peculiar grace to his very fine features and figure. With a look such as superior powers may bend on suffering saints, he welcomed the approach of Julia; and she, given up to the consideration of her brother's sufferings and danger, was only alive to the impression of seeing, in Lascelles, a person who felt as she did.

The meeting between the brother and sister was, on both sides, most affecting. Still, notwithstanding his weak and emaciated state, Horatio was the first to try to turn the conversation into a cheerful channel.—" Do not despond, Julia," he said; I am not so ill as those sweet mild eyes would make me believe. I would go out

too—

too—only," he added, in a tone between pleasantry and embarrassment, "there is company in the house who might take it amiss. Till yesterday Amelia was with me; but Miss Ravenshawe, the hag! found us out, and came here breathing fire and flames. She declared that, after having ruined her angel niece by my extravagance, I should not keep her here to endure the inconveniences attached to it, and carried off the poor little creature, in spite of her tears, in a whirlwind, to the North—ha, ha, ha!—*I* ruined Amelia! Excuse me, Julia and Lascelles, dear, pensive friends! but while I live I must laugh. The expression was excellent—*I* the ruin of Amelia!—ha, ha, ha! And yet," resumed Horatio, in a more feeling tone, "any expences which she incurred were, I am sure, rather the result of ignorance than thoughtlessness. In the first instance, *I* was certainly to blame; and very sorry she was to leave me. Poor thing! she is of a most affectionate disposition!"

Here

Here an expression of irrepressible scorn passed over the countenance of Lascelles; but Julia, with a sign, entreated him not to agitate that tender subject; and Julia found that, by Lascelles, her slightest sign was once again obeyed.

Unconscious of the silent bye-play of this mute dialogue, the too-generous, too-confiding Somerville resumed—"It is as it should be; Mrs. Somerville's sharing my difficulties would greatly increase their poignancy. She was not formed to struggle with the world, and the greatest pain I endure is from the reflection——"

Here the cough that tormented him obliged poor Somerville to pause. Lascelles understood him, and thought this a favourable opportunity to convey to him, with the delicacy he well knew how to use, the message from his father-in-law. The worldly peer, who had long given over his son-in-law, had changed his intention of soliciting a place for him to securing a provision for Amelia: this had been,

been, on that very morning, happily accomplished. Aware that Horatio was of a gay and sanguine turn, Lascelles took care not to represent the motives and opinion of lord Lulworth in their fullest extent, but only said—"As Mr. Somerville's health did not allow him to think, *at present*, of fulfilling the duties of a new employment, it would be perhaps a satisfaction to him to know that lord Lulworth had transferred his solicitude to his daughter, Mrs. Somerville, and had secured to her an income which, he trusted, would put *them both* above the pressure of difficulty."

But Somerville saw into the whole at a glance, and it created in his feelings a fearful and instantaneous change.—"What, sir!" he exclaimed, in a voice tremulous from illness and emotion, "a provision secured for Mrs. Somerville, and no mention made of *me!* I am truly obliged to my lord Lulworth. His paternal solicitude is edifying! He treats his daughter already as

my

my widow. But I will shew my lord Lulworth, and I will shew the whole family yet, that my illness is not so great as——"

• Here he was obliged to stop, from excessive exhaustion; but still his eyes and lips moved, as if trying to express his indignation against lord Lulworth. Julia and Lascelles shuddered at contemplating a noble heart, round every fibre of which the world, like a poisonous weed, had so banefully twined itself.

The disappointment again made Somerville eloquent—"A hollow, smiling, heartless promiser!" he muttered, "what business had *he* to judge of the employments I was or was not equal to? Only yesterday, when I pressed and urged the doctor, he at length replied, that, 'while life remained, it was presumption to pronounce it an absolute impossibility a person could recover.' At all events," he continued, speaking more rapidly, "I might have been appointed. So near it too!" directing

ing his eye forwards, and stretching his feeble hand, as if to grasp some object of speedy and delightful attainment; "I might have had the appointment, sir, I say—if it had been but for an hour, I might have had it. I should have enjoyed the congratulations of my friends, their visits, their cheerful prognostics. Better be supposed, at least, likely to prosper and live—better be en—en—vied than——"

A sudden faintness that came over him inspired Julia and Lascelles for a moment with the dreadful idea that he touched upon the termination of his sufferings; and the unfortunate victim of worldly love and worldly ambition was unable to complete the sentiment that had been, through life, his rule and ruin.

CHAPTER XII.

Youth was thy season of distress and tears,
But pleasure met thee in the vale of years;
Scarce in the vale, ere all thy sand was run,
And thy life ended where thy joys begun.
W. R. SPENCER.

UPON his recovery, Julia thought it a good opportunity to introduce the subject of Mr. De Burgh, and the cheering prospects he held out to him. Somerville heard her with more pleasure, and a slighter preponderance of painful emotion, than she had dared to flatter herself.

Though a dutiful son, he had never loved his parent with that deep and heartfelt affection of which tender and melancholy dispositions perhaps alone are capable. He had never loved him, in short, with such a love as Julia's. He anticipated

pated De Burgh's appearance with satisfaction; and earnestly entreating he might be shewn up, Julia and Lascelles left them to their conference.

What remains farther to be said? The Irishman's generous and honourable conduct shed a bright gleam on Horatio's departing day; but it could not work impossibilities. The vital threads were snapped; but the fever of ambition and rage in his mind was gradually allayed, and he was able to enjoy the fervour of love and friendship, directing all their bright energies towards one dear and legitimate channel, in the united attentions of Julia and Lascelles. The thought of that beloved sister being placed in opulence afforded him a satisfaction which he could not refrain from expressing every moment. He availed himself also of his remaining time to make an addition to Amelia's original settlement, suiting his own honour more than her deserts. He pleased himself with the idea how far it surpassed the provision

 secured

secured to her by lord Lulworth; and Julia was obliged to allow him to indulge the mingled ostentation and generosity of his character in this poor enjoyment.

But was her own heart at ease? Could wealth secure to her what alone makes wealth endearing?—"The conversation I had with Lascelles while De Burgh was with my brother," she secretly sighed, "convinced me of my undiminished power; but, now I am an heiress again, will not his detestable pride once more induce him to shun me? Oh, Lascelles! with all thy knowledge, thou art ignorant of love's first maxim, that, between two hearts sincerely united, there can be no such thing as obligation; for that he who accepts the gift confers a favour on the giver!"

It was decreed that, even in this, Fortune should repair her injustice to Julia. One day that Horatio was lamenting to them his increasing debility, which convinced him, at length, of his own alarming situation,

situation, he expressed his regret at leaving Julia, rich indeed, but still without friend or protector.—"I had once thought lord Rothbury would have been that protector," he said. "*You* were not much obliged to me for that, Lascelles; but I know you have long forgiven me. The gallant De Burgh, too, I am sure, 'has gotten his own consent;' but *there*, I am afraid, the matter rests. Can you tell me, Lascelles, what it is makes our little Julia so difficult?" Then, suddenly changing his tone to one of thrilling interest—"Come," he said, "I have awful warnings that the time for trifling is at an end! Assist me, Lascelles, to make all the amends in my power for endeavouring to divide two hearts *mine* was unworthy to understand. Julia, obey your dying brother—Adolphus, listen to your dying friend."

Lascelles and Julia, as by a simultaneous impulse, knelt down on each side of the altered form of Somerville; and Julia

 heard,

heard, with the certainty *(this time)* of its fulfilment, the engagement taken, that insured to her a protector, guard, and friend, in this, and a guide to a better and a happier world.

Not many days after this, Lascelles and Julia had to mourn the loss of a brother and friend, who, however at times led astray, for many reasons deserved and possessed their warmest affections. During this trying period, Julia found the friendship of Lascelles her greatest support; and when time allowed him to urge the parting injunction of Horatio, she yielded him her hand, in the full confidence that she never should have reason to repent her choice.

How different was the fate of Amelia! About the same period that Julia was united to Lascelles, captain De Ross returned from the Brazils, improved in circumstances, and the same in heart. Finding his lovely and still-beloved cousin at her own disposal, he made her an instant offer

offer of his hand. But that which would, a few years before, have constituted Amelia's felicity, was insufficient to arrest the progress of ill health, begun by mental suffering, and now accelerated by remorse, and a thousand other distressing sensations. To see Death, whom she had so often invoked, approaching, with rapid strides, at the moment that, could she have done so, she would have given treasures for every hour of life prolonged, was destined to be the punishment of Amelia, for the duties she had neglected, and the blessings she had spurned. The near prospect of this awful change shewed her own behaviour to Mrs. Lascelles, when, as Miss Somerville, she was an inmate under her roof, in a very different point of view from that in which self-love had, till now, represented it. She became sensible of the baseness of her conduct towards the generous, uncomplaining Julia, and wrote, earnestly imploring her forgiveness, and

correspondence during the remaining period she had to live.

Mrs. Lascelles scarcely waited for this overture to treat her unhappy sister-in-law with every kindness and attention. Amelia had also the satisfaction of receiving, to the last, proofs of the unchangeable affection of the man who was the object of her first and virgin love. The native tenderness and generosity of her disposition, which passion had warped, and the love of the world choked and stifled, seemed to struggle to revive, as the allurements of *that* world gradually melted before the icy touch of death; and she displayed qualities, at the last, which shewed she had been meant for a different being, if ill-directed feelings, and an injudicious education, had not marred the lovely promise Nature's bounty gave.

More fortunate, apparently, than her sister, lady Claremont, after a due proportion of time given to scruples and indig

nation,

nation, married lord Rothbury; but the indissoluble knot was scarcely tied before she bitterly reproached herself for the breach of her fantastic vow, and, with characteristic inconsistency, neglected every duty her new station called upon her to perform, to bewail the infringement of that imaginary one which it was no longer in her power to fulfil. Some say that she is as outrageously jealous of her present lord as her late lord was of her; and that the earl is so annoyed with her flights, that he has serious thoughts of putting her under private restraint. But this is a complete fabrication; the wildest of her ladyship's caprices do not come within the letter of insanity, and the earl and countess live together as happily as many people.

It is but justice to add, that her ladyship's conscience was soon relieved from the apprehended guilt of murder, the page, Orlando, having received no other permanent injury from his wetting than the

the complete demolition of a superb Spanish dress. The immersion has, on the other hand, been reckoned advantageous to his conversation, which has, since that period, been more sparingly interlarded with tales of the household than heretofore.

Miss Ravenshawe continues to preside over the little community of Rothbury. which has since been enlivened by the return of the Birkits to their native place. Bear Hall no longer deserves the name, but is the seat of mirth, hospitality, and good-humour.

The venerable lady Penmawr herself has had the satisfaction of outliving, a few years, a tyrant, to whom even her advanced age was not sacred. She sees her great-grandchildren around her, and with those blessings must be content, as, being rather too far advanced in life to lead fashions, she can hardly hope to witness the revival of the *forest gown.*

Mrs. Tornado, with whom her sister,

Eliza Birkit, keeps up very little correspondence, has lately been made happier than she deserves, by the marriage of the two Misses Tornado, who were a perpetual source of anxiety to her. The one has been married to a rich Jew merchant; the other to a Christian peer.

Julia continues every day to increase the happiness of Lascelles, and, by her tender and judicious care of the little hapless Celestina, promises, in spite of the errors of her unhappy mother, to render her every thing the fondest parent can desire.

Having nothing now to attach them to Rothbury, and many disagreeable remembrances connected with it, the happiness of this deserving pair was rendered complete, by the removal of Lascelles to a much more valuable living, in the most beautiful part of Berkshire. There, in the practice of the duties of religion and benevolence, in literature, and the embellishment of their small but paradisiacal abode, and the exercise of the thousand generous and delightful

lightful sympathies that flow from their mutual and ardent attachment, they actually contrive to fill up life to their satisfaction, though visiting London very seldom, and never going to watering-places.

The candid reader must devise an apology for conduct so singular and spiritless. For my part, I can discover none, but that Julia and Lascelles had both been singularly unfortunate in their fashionable connexions; and that, having each separately known the extreme of domestic misery, they had learned to set a proportionable value upon the tranquil possession of *domestic happiness.*

FINIS.

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